

INJURY-PREVENTION GUIDE

TREAT & BEAT COMMON PAINS & STRAINS p44

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DECEMBER 2015

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- ▶ **YOUR HOLIDAY TRAINING PLAN**
- ▶ THE SECRET TO RAMPING UP YOUR FITNESS... **FAST!** p31

Caroline
Wöstmann, 32 -
Ultra Marathon
Champion

FAST & HEALTHY RECOVERY MEALS

Insider
Training

6 STRETCHES THAT WILL FIX YOUR FORM

p46



GEAR OF THE YEAR

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Cool Clothes
& Other Runner-
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WARM-UP

DECEMBER
2015

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South African runners really did us proud in 2015. Here are our stars of the year.

COMPILED BY
MIKE FINCH AND
LISA NEVITT

RW's 2015 RUNNERS of the Year

Ultra runner Gift Kelehe, on his way to winning this year's Comrades.

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GEAR OF THE YEAR

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BY DR JEFF BROWN,
WITH LIZ NEPORENT

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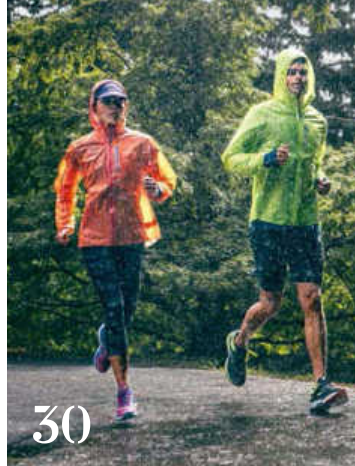
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BY BRUCE PINNOCK



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● HOW'S YOUR FORM?

In this month's issue, we share six exercises to improve running form. For a video demonstration of this routine, visit runnersworld.co.za/formfixers



ON THE COVER

DECEMBER 2015



Runner – Caroline
Wöstmann

Photographed by
Tarryn Hatchett

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WARM-UP

THE LOOP

THE INBOX

WINNING LETTER BIRTHDAY SURPRISE

Five years ago, my leg suddenly buckled beneath me. It turned out I needed major spinal surgery, which meant I had to learn to walk again. During my inactivity, I became unfit and gained 25 kilograms. Eventually, when I felt up to it, my daughter persuaded me to participate in a parkrun. I kept at it, steadily plodding a little further each week. I finished my first half marathon in 2:38, and I plan to celebrate my 60th birthday by running a marathon next year. - JOHAN RICH, EAST LONDON

PASSION OVER FASHION

I'm sure The New Rules of Running (RW September 2015) was intended as a light-hearted take on running etiquette; but after reading the article, I was left feeling as though I fall under the category of 'unfashionable eyesore'. Not all of us can afford the – let's be honest – over-priced, trendy, matchy-matchy gear. And besides, I'm perfectly happy running in my oldest, saggy-bottomed tracksuit pants – which your article has branded a fashion *faux pas*. Running should remain a sport that affords the freedom of escape from an already judgemental world.

- GABBY DANIZ, MOSSEL BAY

AN APOLOGY

Old Edwardians Athletic Club would like to apologise [to the Central Gauteng Athletics Disciplinary Committee] for the incident that occurred on 10 August 2015 at our Annual Road Race, where volunteers who were used for a refreshment table were affiliated to a political party. We did not intend to bring the sport into disrepute through our actions on the day, and did not intentionally break the Athletics rules. - MARK MOHRING, CHAIRMAN OF OLD EDWARDIANS ATHLETIC CLUB, JOHANNESBURG

[Old Eds accepted an offer from the local DA branch to assist as volunteers at water tables at their annual road race.]

THE POLL

If you could only race **ONE** distance for the rest of your life, what would it be?

12%
5-K

35%
10-K

17%
Half Marathon

15%
Marathon

19%
Ultra Marathon

RUNNER'S WORLD reserves the right to edit readers' submissions. All readers' submissions become the sole property of *Runner's World* and may be published in any medium and for any use worldwide.

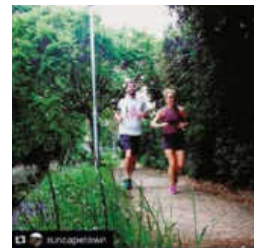


This month's winning letter will receive a **Wahoo Fitness Blue HR Heart Rate Strap**, valued at R900. The Wahoo Fitness Blue HR Heart Rate Strap connects wirelessly to your Bluetooth 4.0-enabled iOS device (no adapters needed!), and delivers accurate, real-time heart-rate data through the free Wahoo Fitness App. You now have heart-rate data, playlists, your phone, GPS maps and more – all on one device! **Write to: Runner's World, PO Box 16368, Vlaeberg, 8018; Fax: 021 408 3811; or email: rwletters@media24.com** (letters must be no longer than 100 words and must include your name, address and telephone number or email address).

THE GALLERY

#INSTARWRUN

We asked runners to show off their running experiences. Here are four submissions that made us envious.



"Thanks @runcapetown for the wonderful time exploring the city by foot! We had a blast! @runcapetown with @repostapp Whitney and Brandon enjoyed a lovely run in Newlands with @aka_doylie yesterday, despite the cold and rainy weather! Good job guys! - [wmgriggs1010](#)



"Sunday balance! Torrential rains and hectic winds made our first #landmarks21km definitely one for the memory banks. #instapic" - [Candybrand](#)



"#Komatsu #21k Slight uphill all the way with a downhill at the end, but the wind decided to push the runners back a bit." - [Yolindidewet](#)



"Cape Gate 10km Charity #run SO fab #running into you Olivia! #instarwrn" - [crystleynne.moore](#)

THE QUESTION

f MINDBLOWING! HOW HAS RUNNING CHANGED YOUR LIFE?

"Running has changed my attitude towards life, because it has made me a stronger person who is better able to cope."

– Charmain Rabie

"Throughout my years of running, I've met some of the most amazing and inspirational people."

– Michelle Humphreys

"Makes me happier and healthier – and it makes my life more fun!"

– Brandon Frayne

"I never could've imagined the self-confidence and self-belief I would find in being able to achieve a running goal."

– Robyn Mommsen

"My holidays always include a race. I plan months in advance."

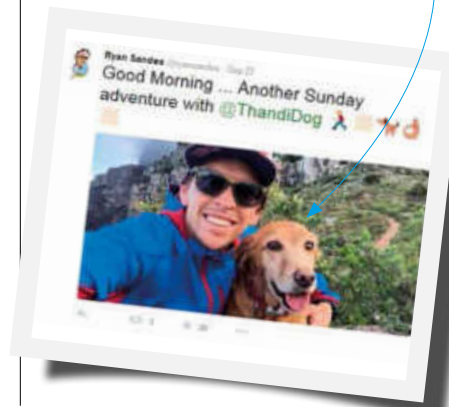
– Benita Maree

"I've become a better person, made new friends, and I even met my boyfriend through running. I'm healthier, so I'll continue to run until I can't anymore."

– Jessica Willis

TWEET OF THE MONTH

"GOOD MORNING...
ANOTHER SUNDAY
ADVENTURE WITH
@THANDIDOG"
– @RYANSANDES



RATE YOUR
RACE



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(previously known as the
FFG Potchefstroom Spring
Festival 10km)

"A great event – there was an awesome vibe among the runners, and the course was well lit. You run two loops of five kays, so your supporters can spectate at the halfway mark. The marshals and supporters were great, the race was well-organised, and you could enter the race right up until the starting gun. I loved every minute."
– Martin Hennelly

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WARM-UP

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Southern African Edition: A joint venture between Rodale Press, Inc and Media24 Magazines.

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BUFFELS BAY

PHOTOGRAPHS & WORDS BY

Ewald Sadie

RUNNER

Adele Morkel-Sadie

GPS LOCATION

34°05'10.9"S 22°58'26.4"E

TERRAIN

The stretch of beach between Buffels Bay and Brenton-on-Sea has only a few small patches of rocks to negotiate. But that doesn't mean it's okay to run without shoes, as the sand is deceptively coarse, even in areas where it's hard-packed, and can really hurt the soles of your feet.

Running on the more moist sand down by the water is easiest, because it offers the most resistance; but the higher you run, the looser it gets, and the more effort is required to move forward. That gives you a unique opportunity to choose your own level of exertion.

BEST TIME TO RUN

Low tide. As the tide rises, the section of 'runable' beach shrinks, forcing you higher up onto the loose sand, which makes for a less-desirable run. To ensure maximum enjoyment, keep an eye on the tide charts.

An early-morning run on the beach is the best way to start your day. But later in the afternoon, when the summer heat is less potent, is also good. During peak season, your chances are higher of encountering other like-minded, healthy people running or walking on this stretch of beach.

GRADING

Easy (with the option to make it more challenging). →





DURATION

The five-kilometre run should take a runner of average fitness around 30 minutes – an hour if you opt for the return journey as well. Brenton-on-Sea has a few small restaurants, so grab a coffee before you head back.


OTHER ACTIVITIES

Buffels Bay is a quaint seaside town of only 100 houses, and the atmosphere is relaxed. Most activities revolve around fishing, surfing and spending time on the beach. Around 15 minutes drive up the coast from Buffels Bay lies one of South Africa's biggest tourist attractions, the town of Knysna. Here you'll find a limitless list of things to do and see. Drive 15 minutes in the other direction (towards Cape Town), and you'll hit Sedgefield, where there are various restaurants and pubs, a vintage car museum, and a farmers' market every Saturday morning.

REFUEL AT

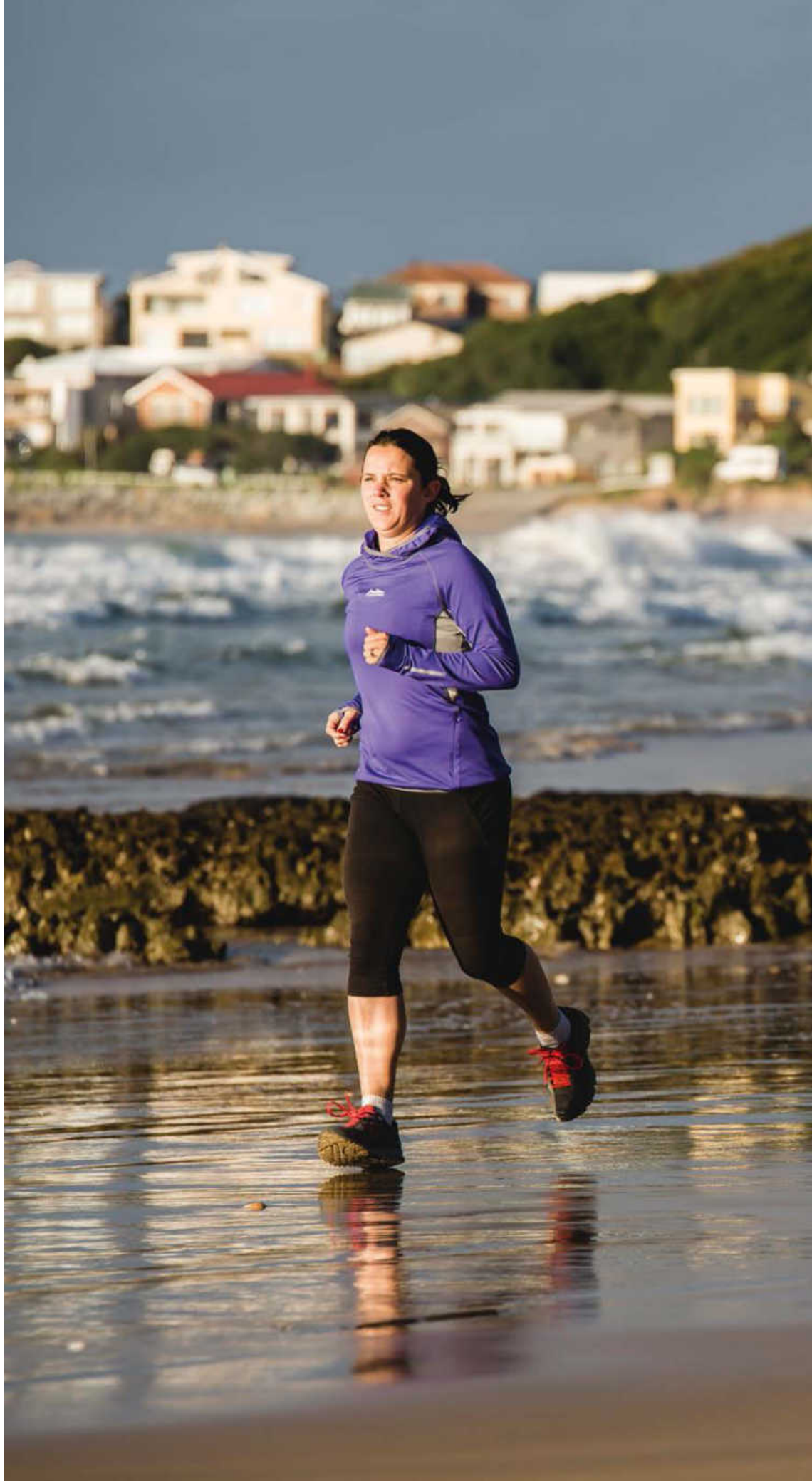
Grab a bite or a drink at Brenton-on-Sea's Nautical South Restaurant, a 300-metre walk from the parking area at the beach. Alternatively, make your way back to Buffels Bay, and stop at the Buffalo Bay Beach Restaurant for a post-run coffee or something to eat. You'll find another alternative on the way back towards the N2 – River Deck, a small restaurant, is situated on the banks of the Goukamma River.

GETTING THERE

From Cape Town or PE, take the N2 towards Knysna. From CT, around 10km before Knysna, take the Buffels Bay turn-off on your right; from PE, 10km *after* Knysna, take the turn-off on your left. Follow the road for nine kilometres to the main beach parking area, close to the restaurant. 



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RUNNING AND MARRIAGE

Sometimes the rules of running apply to some of life's big happenings.

At the time of going to print, I'm only a few days away from my wedding. Nerves are mounting, I have a little knot building in my stomach, and I'm doing an hourly checklist to make sure I haven't forgotten anything. It's a little like preparing for a big race.

Any major undertaking takes preparation. There have been dance lessons, cake-tasting, music-choosing, venue-deciding – and the crucial 'where to go on honeymoon' decision. It's been a whirlwind of frantic dotting of i's and crossing of t's, and making sure that everything happens as it should on race... er, I mean, the wedding day.

Luckily, I've tapped into my experience as a runner to help reduce the stress. Despite all the base mileage, the most crucial week is the one just before the big day. I've cut down on carbs, upped my sleep, and made a plan to keep my life as normal as possible. And try nothing new.

Granted the bachelor party threw a spanner in the works, but like that last long run, it was a week before the big day, and I should have recovered sufficiently to be in top form, own the dance floor, and deliver a half-decent thank-you speech.

Admittedly, my fiancée has had more to do. For her, the big day is a little like a stage race. There are multiple dress fittings, hair options, and bridesmaids to think about – whereas choosing suits is a fairly simple affair, and my choices in hair-do are limited to a short-back-and-sides or nothing, and maybe some product on my fringe.


On the big day, I will probably prepare myself with an early breakfast, and have

arranged with my mates to tackle a subdued trail run in the morning, followed by a double latte and a chocolate croissant. The run will be short enough to ensure that the legs are still sufficiently fresh to show off a solid

"The run will be short enough to ensure that the legs are still sufficiently fresh to show off a solid dance version of Juluka's *Impi*..."

dance version of Juluka's *Impi* that night, and impress our guests with a first dance that's worth sharing on Facebook.

I shall try to be 'in the moment' throughout the day. To remember the sights and sounds, and relish every stage. I will probably be pretty tired at the end of it all, but it will be that 'happy' tired.

Come to think of it, this wedding is exactly like a big race... 

MIKE FINCH
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
@MikeFinchSA

WHY MARRIAGE IS LIKE RUNNING

1. Consistency is everything.
2. You'll have a few bad days, but they'll be outweighed by good days.
3. You have to put in the quality time to reap the reward.
4. You have to be committed.
5. Support is vital to success.
6. They both have the power to change lives.



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p20

"I FEEL LIKE A NEW PERSON!" DEVIN PIKE SWOPPED BOOZE FOR RUNNING.

HUMAN()RACE

p22

NEWS, TRENDS, *and* REGULAR RUNNERS *doing* AMAZING THINGS

MEET THE
BREAK-
THROUGH

TOP OF THE TABLE

NAME:
CHRISTIAAN GREYLING
AGE: 31
OCCUPATION:
SUPPLY CHAIN ENGINEER

Christiaan Greyling's trail-running profile has skyrocketed since he won the 100km Elite race at this year's Ultra Trail Cape Town. He outran 2015 Comrades winner (and hot favourite) Gift Kelehe, as well as ultra-race master Jock Green, which has catapulted him into the limelight and opened his eyes to the possibility of becoming a star. Perhaps it was his level-headed nature that led him to being crowned king of Table Mountain: his knack for balancing running with a fulltime job and marriage to trail-running star Landie Greyling.

WORDS:
André Valentine
PICTURES:
Stephen Granger

PHOTOGRAPH BY JETLINE ACTION PHOTO (WUKI KAWAUCHI)

HUMAN RACE



→ **I honed my trail-running skills** on the farm where I grew up, in Mpumalanga. There was a two-day hiking trail on the farm, so for me, rock hopping became second nature. I remember completing my first 20km trail on the farm at age five. Back then, I mainly hiked the route – little did I know that one day I would run it in two and a half hours.

The first off-road sports I indulged in were mountain

a trail, got engaged on a trail, and then got married on a trail. But it was only natural, because the mountain trails are where we spend most of our time.

My job is demanding, so I train less than I should. But I dedicate at least an hour a day on weekdays, and prioritise long runs at the weekend. This adds up to about 10 hours a week.

“Many of them told me it was my race to win. If you hear that often enough, you start to believe it.”

biking, rock climbing, and eventually adventure racing. I love competing in nature, and my background in adventure racing has certainly given me the mental capacity to endure ultra running.

Mountain biking is an excellent cross-training exercise, which increases the power in my legs and enhances my technical ability. Because of mountain biking, I can read a trail on a quick descent much faster than any road runner could.

The story of how I met my wife Landie sounds corny: we met on

Making time for training takes discipline, but it is doable. You have at least two free hours in the morning, one at lunchtime, and two hours after work. It's up to you to make a commitment.

Some described conditions at the Ultra Trail Cape Town as less than favourable. But I prefer cold weather to hotter temperatures, because heat causes dehydration and depletes your energy.

I focused on my own race, as I considered myself inexperienced compared with some of the other

athletes in the field, like Gift Kelehe and Jock Green. Besides, racing other athletes can make you lose focus on the finer details.

I had surrounded myself with people who were a positive influence. Many of them told me it was my race to win. If you hear that often enough, you start to believe it. And when you believe you can win, you're already 70% there. All that's left to do is run and pray.

I was quite surprised that at one point, Green and I were sharing the lead. I had also expected that Kelehe and Salameh Al Aqra (*Marathon de Sables Champion – Ed.*) would join us. I knew Green was in control, because he's experienced at ultras – especially this course – so I decided to stick with him.




Greyling beat a world-class field that included trail-star Jock Green, and 2015 Comrades winner Gift Kelehe.

I always believed I could win – even when I was outside the top five in the race – because if I didn't, I'd have given myself no chance of winning at all. I told myself that the only way I could beat Kelehe was if he made a mistake – which, fortunately for me, he did.

This win brings me closer to my ultimate dream: to compete alongside Landie professionally, on the international stage, and have the opportunity to travel. But before that, I need to find the time to train more often, as those international runners are in a different league.

Media attention is usually lavished on Landie – the better-looking of the two of us! But I've taken advantage of the media coverage that comes with my win, by marketing myself as a brand. Brands sell, and the monetary gains will enable me to carry on doing what I love.

I want to look back on my life and feel that I have lived it to the fullest – with no regrets about the things I didn't do, the places I didn't see, the trails I didn't run, and the changes I didn't make. 

(Turn to p68 for more top-performing South African athletes.)

Dream Job: To compete with his trail-star wife Landie on the international stage.



The Singlet

BECAUSE RUNNING ISN'T
JUST ABOUT STRING VESTS.



ASK THE TRAIL STAR
Ryan Sandes

I struggle to run in hot weather. Do you have any advice? – TARYN, Prince Albert

Running in hot weather affects running performance negatively, in some more than others. That's why it's important that mentally, you make peace with the fact that training in the sun will be hard. Worrying about the conditions being too hot will cause you to tense up, which will only make things worse.

Before I set out for a run in the height of summer, I visualise how I'm going to feel, and try to focus on the positives. This helps when outside temperatures are beyond my control.

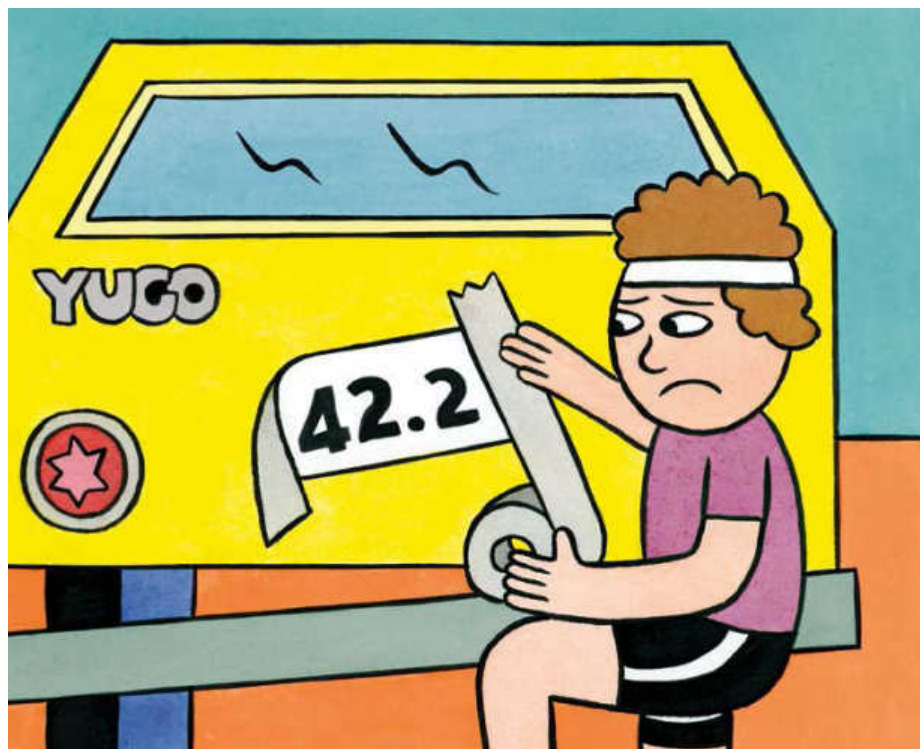
Physically, it's important

"...make peace with the fact that training in the sun will be hard."

you hydrate with water and electrolytes before and during your run. If you run with a cap or visor, wet it – if your brain gets too hot, it will automatically slow you down, so keeping your head cool is vital. I would also suggest starting off at a slightly slower pace than you're used to, and then building up gradually. This will help you to avoid a spike in your heart rate, which you'll take longer to recover from in hotter conditions.

Everyone struggles to run in the heat; it's how you handle it that counts.

Ryan Sandes, a.k.a 'Hedgie', is a trail-running supremo, with race wins too numerous to mention.



STICKER OF SHAME

I haven't run a marathon in a while. How long can I keep my 42.2 bumper sticker on my car?

There are people who still have Oppikoppi festival stickers stuck on their cars dating back to the early 90s. I once spotted the fish symbol on the rear end of a bakkie – and that's not a recent event, because Jesus walked among us thousands of years ago. Then there are

maybe newer stuff needs to happen. You ran a marathon, and you still feel compelled to tell other drivers about it by sporting a sticker on your car. At the same time, you're embarrassed that said marathon is yesterday's news – you ran it in the same year you head-banged at Oppikoppi. That's because you feel guilty about having not run frequently enough or far enough since. And if other drivers sitting in traffic are

win-win either way. You can do it, Champ!

TO PEE OR NOT TO PEE?

If you find yourself in a port-a-loo during the National Anthem, what should you do? It gets awfully quiet, so I feel awkward continuing to use the loo.

We have eleven official languages in South Africa, and a seriously fractious past. Our national anthem, with its Xhosa, Zulu, Sesotho, Afrikaans and English bits, is meant to indicate that everyone in the new South Africa deserves respect and dignity.

So if you find yourself peeing in a port-a-loo when the National Anthem starts, you've got to time your run, as it were. To avoid disrespect, wait for the cheer at the end of the singing. Or, alternatively, next time avoid the all-you-can-eat curry special at Vinny's Vindaloo House. Caught short? No problem. Our nation has a fantastic sense of toilet humour. Where else could Leon Schuster have made his fortune?

"You ran a marathon, and you still feel compelled to tell other drivers about it by sporting a sticker on your car..."

those drivers who are five years hideously divorced, yet still can't bring themselves to peel off the harmonious, stick-figure families from the bumpers of their five-door saloons with plenty of room for the little ones.

My point? Stuff happens, we proclaim it, time passes; then,

wondering how old your car is, then that sticker is a dead giveaway.

There are two possible solutions: either remove the sticker, and live happily ever after – or run a new marathon, place the new sticker over the old one, and... live happily ever after. It's a big decision, but a

HUMAN RACE

RUN IT OFF CLUB

I RAN
OFF
28KG!



NO WEIGH TO LIVE

Pike stopped floundering with fat, and got serious about weight loss.

THE WAKE-UP

My friends and I were living it up. We ate junk food, drank copious amounts of alcohol and enjoyed the local nightlife. But at the same time, my cholesterol was high and I was constantly tired. What began as a carefree lifestyle soon left me feeling like I hadn't really accomplished anything.


THE SHAKE-UP

I'd heard mornings are the best time to exercise if you want to kick-start your metabolism, so at the beginning of winter, that's the time of day I would hit the gym – every day. But much to my dismay, the weight wasn't falling away as quickly as I'd hoped.

So my girlfriend Shimone, who loves to run, encouraged me to join her. At first I hated running, because I didn't think it would help me. Finding the right pair of running shoes, and the early-morning wake-ups, the sweating and the distance covered proved challenging. I have Shimone to thank for her constant motivation – she really kept my head on track.

THE REWARD

Running not only helped me shed those extra kilograms of fat, and improve my fitness and strength, it also helped relieve the stress that being overweight had caused. Instead, I've learned to have a positive attitude. And nowadays I only surround myself with friends who will contribute positively towards my lifestyle change. Running has given me a new-found sense of freedom: I literally feel like a new person, every day!

So far, I've finished three half marathons, and I'm going to participate in my fourth, the Two Oceans Half, next year. If I can lose 28kg, then anything is possible – perhaps, one day, I'll conquer the Comrades. – As told to Lisa Nevitt 

DEVIN PIKE

Age: 32

Home Town:
Pietermaritzburg

Height: 1.85m

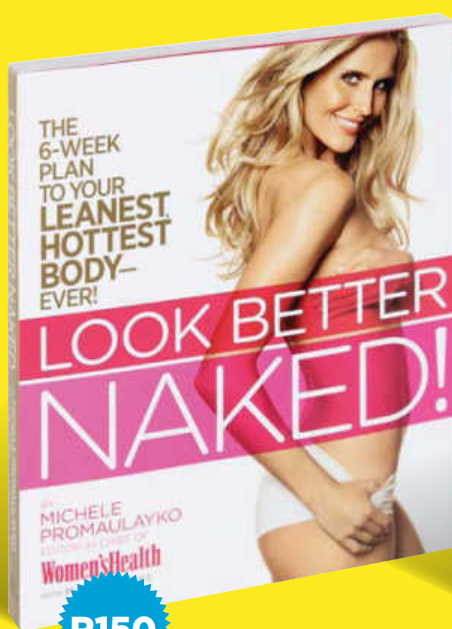
Occupation:
Senior ICT
Support

Time Required:
2 years

Then: 124kg

Now: 96kg

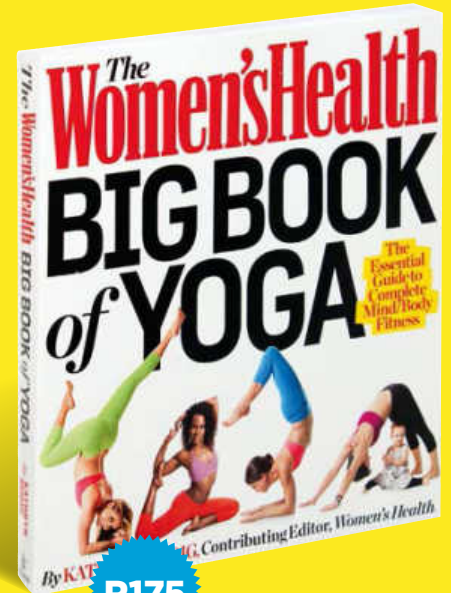
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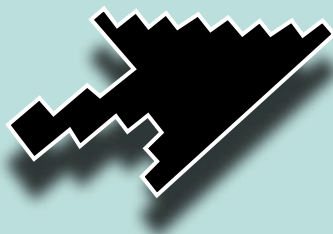
HUMAN
RACE

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

AS 2015 DRAWS TO AN END, WE'VE BEEN MULLING OVER SOME PRETTY INTERESTING STATS FROM THIS YEAR'S RUNNING. SOME ARE WEIRD, SOME ARE WACKY, AND OTHERS SHOW OFF TRENDS. REGARDLESS, THEY SHOWCASE WHAT AMAZING RUNNERS YOU ALL ARE. – ANDRÉ VALENTINE

THREE

The number of people who uploaded those races to the RW calendar!



1 090

THE NUMBER OF RACES ORGANISED IN SA THIS YEAR, ACCORDING TO RUNNERSWORLD.CO.ZA.



1 117 281km

THE TOTAL DISTANCE RUN BY THIS YEAR'S COMRADES FINISHERS.

4259 DNFs

At comrades 2015

12 734

THE NUMBER OF OFFICIAL COMRADES MARATHON FINISHERS IN 2015.



8 YEARS

How long that runner would take if he ran the same pace as this year's Comrades winner, Gift Kelehe.



IF A SINGLE RUNNER RAN THAT DISTANCE, THE NUMBER OF TIMES THEY WOULD RUN AROUND THE WORLD.



28

"GIRL POWER!"

5 129

The number of women who participated in the inaugural Cape Town 12 (904 more than in the men's field).





15 752 LITRES

Amount of Coke available
at Cape Town Marathon
water tables.



70%

PERCENTAGE OF CAPE TOWN 12
PARTICIPANTS WHO DON'T BELONG
TO A RUNNING CLUB.

11.6

The average number of
water sachets used by
each runner at the Cape
Town Marathon.



185 000

WATER SACHETS USED AT THE
CAPE TOWN MARATHON.

994 MILLILITRES

IF ALL THE COKE
AT THE CAPE TOWN
MARATHON HAD BEEN
CONSUMED, THE
AMOUNT EACH RUNNER
WOULD HAVE HAD.

parkrun 300 000

The number of runners registered for
parkrun in South Africa, as of October 2015.



23.6%

PERCENTAGE OF CAPE TOWN 12 PARTICIPANTS WHO WORE
ASICS SHOES - THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF ANY BRAND.

15 844

The number of entrants
for the Sanlam Cape
Town Marathon.



31%

Percentage of Cape
Town Marathon runners
(all events) running their
first-ever race.



20 000

THE AVERAGE TOTAL ATTENDANCE AT SA
PARKRUN EVENTS ON A GOOD SATURDAY.

The fastest parkrun time this year.

FOURTEEN MINUTES





TRAILS OF FURY

Can a tar junkie survive the wilderness?

On a warm and breezy Friday afternoon with a couple of friends, the battle lines were drawn. Beer in hand, chest puffed out, my pro-tar friend Tyrone was boasting about his recent road-running exploits. But halfway (and a few drinks) into his virtuous story about the time he'd annihilated

a hill-training session, he was rudely interrupted. Andy – my other mate, and an up-and-coming dirt-kicker of note – decided to present a mouth-watering challenge.

It was a simple ask, but with unspoken ramifications. Andy urged Tyrone to put his headlining feet where his galloping mouth was, swap his road-running shoes for trail-running shoes, and see how he handled joining us on our next off-road adventure. Never one to back down from an opportunity to prove his manliness, Tyrone immediately accepted, warning Andy that he'd better prepare for an all-out war.

I was the mediator between two gung-ho rivals, anticipating sweat, grunting, and possibly even bloodshed.

The following morning, Andy and I headed to our stomping grounds, where we found Tyrone, ready and waiting. He gestured towards his wrist, indicating that we were late – by 12 minutes, to be exact!

"We'd be inhaling exhaust fumes by now, if we were doing this in the streets," he sighed.

Andy had to bite his tongue – how dare this alien attempt to rush him? Was he not aware that a trail run isn't about beating the morning

"I was the mediator between two gung-ho rivals, anticipating sweat, grunting, and possibly even bloodshed."

traffic? His questions were about to be answered, because as we started our run, Tyrone blasted off like a heat-seeking missile launched in hell.

Though our enthusiastic friend made it okay on his own through the first kilometre, he eventually found himself in the thick of a singletrack forest, with various offshoots and diverging pathways. He hadn't anticipated there would be more than one clearly-marked route – and his pride wouldn't allow him to wait for directions.

For about 30 minutes, there was no sign of Tyrone. In his confusion, he had taken a wrong turn at precisely the wrong moment, unknowingly selecting a route that would lead

him across a waist-deep river, over enormous boulders, and under some rather unforgiving shrubbery. This became unquestionably apparent halfway through our run, when we eventually caught up to our bewildered, banged-up companion. There were gashes in his knees, scratches on his arms, and he had the fear of the Trail God himself in his eyes. He'd had to sit down on a tree stump.

"Guys! Help me out here!" he begged.


Andy couldn't control himself. He let out an earth-shuddering laugh at his opponent's misfortune, with a smattering of excitable giggles in an 'I told you so' sort of tone.

But instead of making Tyrone feel like a failure, Andy's unsympathetic outburst only motivated him to get up and carry on. What Andy hadn't realised was that Tyrone was a seasoned, peak-hour-traffic road runner. His complaint at the beginning of our run – the one about inhaling exhaust fumes – hadn't been one of frustration, but of yearning.

Yes, Tyrone had endured far worse than a few cuts and bruises on the mean streets where he plied his sporting trade. He'd withstood whistles, shouts, jeers and unsolicited comments, survived people-packed pavements, bicycles, oncoming traffic, and indecisive robots. Tyrone had persevered through setting suns and dark alleyways, and he'd be damned if a cut on his knee was going to snatch victory from his war-horse jaws –

especially in the face of trailie humiliation.

With a grunt, Tyrone dusted himself off and propelled himself onward once again – only this time, he did so with the purpose of a guided missile, dead set on splitting rivers in two, smashing boulders to smithereens, and destroying any unforgiving shrubbery that dared grow in his path. His target: the finish line; his aim: to beat Andy at his own bushwhacking game.

Trail hath no fury like a road runner scorned. 

Mathew Love works in communications, and has a passion for writing, running, and football.



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The Fast Life

BY LAUREN FLESHMAN



TAKE IT FROM ME

Listen to advice from the best coaches in the biz – like I didn't.

Despite the apparent eternal youth of certain 40-something elites, like Bernard Lagat and Deena Kastor, most of us pro runners retire in our early to mid-30s to join the ranks of the enthusiastically recreational. I am currently 33, which is like 74 in pro runner years. And like lots of hip grannies I know, I am

finding myself increasingly reflective of my early runner years, able to see which seemingly insignificant moments turned out to be critically important turning points. And with only a few more years left of my pro runner life span, I'm doing my best to scoop up all of these lessons now to make the most of it. Had I listened to this advice when I was at the top of my game, I could be writing this column from my holiday home in Monaco between spa treatments.

Consistency wins

In my first pro track season (2004), I literally ran into legendary running coach Mark Wetmore on the trails, the day before going up against his athletes in a 5-K track race. I hadn't spoken to him much in the five years since we sat face to face at his desk, when I visited him at the university where he coached runners. Back then, I'd been a 17-year-old hoping to make it onto his team. Wetmore broke the awkward silence by congratulating me on going pro, and offered some advice. The key to becoming great, he said, isn't found on the edges of training, diet, science, or technology. The key is consistent, uninterrupted training. This coming from a guy who coached a million world-class athletes, including my Oiselle teammate Kara Goucher. Did I listen? Nope.

A perceptive guy, maybe he sensed that I had changed since graduating and going pro. This was the year that I abandoned the consistent approach from college that won me five US National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) titles and 15 All-American titles. The year I decided that I needed to make the leap to the next step (winning at an international level), and that I needed to make it all in one year. I went on to lose 3.5kg in an attempt to get my measurements to match those in world-record holder Paula Radcliffe's online athlete bio (which, as it turns out, was wrong). I lived like a Kenyan (that is, my fantasy of a Kenyan's life). I severed relationships. I stopped listening

to my body. I tried to will myself to the next level. The very week after running into Wetmore, I broke my foot, and his words haunted me for three years until things finally clicked. Back when I was a little softer, stayed up late with friends occasionally, and slowed my paces down or skipped a run when I was extremely tired, I was a force.

Being consistently “pretty awesome” beats “amazingly awesome” because amazingly awesome rarely makes it to the starting line.

It's a business

My first world cross-country team, I was teammates with none other than Bob Kennedy, my pro running hero. Former American record holder, Olympian, first non-African under 13.00 for 5-K, had a Nike racing spike named after him – you get the picture. He was 79 in pro runner years at the time, and I was cracking the starch on my first-ever pro runner onesie, trying not to use my pacifier in public. One night in Belgium, my coach and I grabbed dinner with Bob, and over steak and fries I calmly asked if he had any advice for me as a first-year pro hoping to reach his grizzly age one day without losing my job. Stories of athletes losing their contracts or suffering massive financial reductions after one bad season swirled around everywhere, and here Bob was, seemingly unscarred, a legend, and someone I assumed would be on a lifetime contract after he retired. How can I get job security? How do you get the powers that be to believe in you? To see you through the tough times that befall all athletes? To invest in and market the journey?

Bob didn't rant, tell horror stories, or complain. He essentially said, “Don't believe for a second it's anything but business. If you take that advice, you'll never be disappointed.” I nodded my head like a good student, and then promptly set out to prove him wrong. He wasn't.

Sports sponsorship is not philanthropy. While different companies have varied approaches to what they value, how they measure

performance, and how cutthroat they are, they all care about return on investment. It's important to know and accept what makes their motor run. Trying to change a company's core is like trying to change your spouse. You might be able to get him to put the toilet seat down, but he's never going to ‘enjoy’ foreign films.

Don't try to improve more than one or two things per season

Teammate Nick Symmonds, one of the most consistent 800-metre runners of all time, used to blow our minds when he would say he was only picking one or two things to improve on in the upcoming year. This was a guy whose entire job was to be a PROFESSIONAL ATHLETE. Our pro team full of talented people would look at him and think he was underreaching, and that it was irresponsible to have that much potential and intentionally leave so much of it untapped, saved for a later date that may never come. But you know who was laughing at the end of every season? Nick. Nick was one of the top performers in the world every single year. Half the team never made it to the starting line. You'd think this would convert all of us to Nick's approach, but people are funny. Instead, most people would say “Nick's just a freak. His success comes in spite of his approach. Imagine if he actually took some risks. How good could he be?”

There's no magic programme

A.k.a. “Stop looking at what everyone else is doing all the time: it's annoying, not to mention it makes you incapable of optimising what you've got.” Okay, so legendary coach Vin Lananna didn't say that exactly, but I kinda wish he had. I brought home a lot of hardware with Vin as my coach at varsity, but after that I started comparing my training to what other pros were doing. Vin was receptive to outside ideas, but he warned me that I wouldn't find what I was looking for. Every hour spent looking for it was a missed opportunity to absorb, build, and capitalise on what I had right in front of me. Did I listen? I'm assuming

“It took me years to understand an important lesson from the legendary Kim Smith: Life is better with bacon.”



What's the best advice you ever received?

“Hold back until you reach the final kilometres of your race.”
– Malcom Pike

“What the mind believes, the body can achieve.”
– Palesa Lepule


“Rest is just as important as training.”
– Etienne van Deventer

“Don't give up. You've got this.”
– Rebecca Durham Grosskopf

you're seeing a theme here. I left Vin for another programme, and ran into the same problem there. It wasn't until six years later, when I started working with coach Mark Rowland, that I was ready to take Vin's advice. I vetted Rowland's philosophy before committing, and then went all in. I saved evaluation time for when it was appropriate and useful – during the off-season – and had the best international results of my career. I think coach Dena Evans said it best (also something that I didn't listen to for 10 years): “Leave the dance with the guy who brought you.”

Eat more bacon

When I roomed with Kim Smith on the international racing circuit in 2003, I couldn't believe her diet. Packets of sweets. An abandoned half-gnawed carrot to fulfill the veggie requirement. After a particularly stunning race performance, in a diner at London's Heathrow Airport, she engaged with a second dripping slab of fatback bacon without a trace of guilt, with no sign of internal kilojoule calculation, and I had to say something. “Kim, how can you eat that and be so lean and fast?” She looked up from her plate, and in her New Zealand accent through shining lips simply said, “You can eat byken.”

I preferred to believe Kim had a superhuman metabolism, and that egg-white veggie omelets and giant salads were the only way I could maintain my form. It took me years to realise that you don't have to have a ‘bad list’ of foods, so long as you eat appropriate portion sizes. A belated thanks, Kimi. Life's better (and faster) with byken. In fact, thanks to everyone who gave me advice that I ignored. And thanks to everyone I still haven't listened to, there's still time. Despite my advanced professional years, I don't plan on quitting the sport anytime soon. I hope to run through my 70s. The real 70s. The opportunities for epiphany are boundless! 

Follow Lauren Fleshman – pro runner, world championship athlete, and businesswoman – on **twitter: @laurenfleshman**

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PERSONAL BEST

GET FIT, EAT SMART, RUN STRONG

TAPE SECRETS

Tweaked your knee – but have a race tomorrow? Tape it. Plan to hit the trails – but don't want to uproot an old ankle injury? Tape it. Kinesiology tape – the flexible, colourful bandage strips you've probably seen on competitive athletes – enhances mobility while protecting vulnerable spots from injury and re-injury. "Taping is hands-down my favourite conservative treatment for runners' soft-tissue injuries," says ultra-running podiatrist Austin Sedicum, who runs a private practice. "Kinesiology tape can support tendons, ligaments, muscles and joints while allowing full range of motion, so you can keep exercising while healing." There are several brands of kinesio tape available at pharmacies. For more on caring for injury-prone body parts, see page 44. 

Watch a
demonstration
on proper taping
technique at
[runnersworld.
co.za/howtotape](http://runnersworld.co.za/howtotape).



TRAINING

Races go on even if it rains, so use damp long runs to test gear for wet-weather comfort.

WHINE AND SHINE

What you take away from tough days can set you up for future success.

By Jessica Migala

WHETHER YOU'RE going long to prep for a race or simply to build endurance and fitness, not every outing will go smoothly. Maybe it's pouring down, or you feel tired, or you have to dart into every toilet you see along the way. The problems may make you miserable in the moment, but they can help you in the long run (pun intended). "Dealing with different conditions and circumstances in your run can train you to be a smarter and more prepared runner," says Janet Hamilton, running coach at RunningStrong.com. No matter what the day throws at you, here's how to get through it and learn from the experience.



SHOOTING: EMO-JACKETS

GI DISTRESS

You and your running buddies have probably swapped tales of mid-run port-a-loo dashes due to nausea or runner's trots. In fact, research shows that up to 50 per cent of endurance athletes complain of stomach woes.

SURVIVE IT A sloshing stomach often starts with dehydration or an electrolyte imbalance. Take a walk break and have some sports drink or water, says Hamilton. As for the trots, find a loo asap. If you can continue the run in either scenario, that's good practice for coping with GI issues that may pop up mid-race. But if you're dry-heaving, vomiting, or making stop after stop to void, call it a day.

LEARN FROM IT You may need to drink more or take in more electrolytes. "I've had a few athletes take electrolyte tablets before their runs, and some say it helps prevent the trots," says Hamilton. Also take stock of anything new or different you ate in the previous 48 hours (not just the night or morning before), and skip the potential offenders next time.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

If the skies open or the wind howls as you're lacing up for your 15-K, you have two choices: power through, or reschedule. But if you bail on a run now, you'll be ill-prepared to handle similar conditions at a race.


SURVIVE IT If going outside is dangerous – really strong winds, lightning, extreme heat or cold – postpone, or head for a treadmill. If it's rainy or blustery and you're training for an event, run as planned. "It can help to prepare you for how to adjust your pace or what to wear on race day," says Hamilton. For example, a visor keeps rain out of your eyes, while body-hugging clothes reduce drag on windy days, and the chance of chafing on wet ones.

LEARN FROM IT If your long run is set for Saturday, check the weather on Thursday, says exercise physiologist and triathlon coach Krista Schultz. You're allowed to move the long run to Friday or Sunday to avoid the worst weather – just remember to schedule an easy or rest day between every hard or long effort.

JUNK LEGS

If you've been building your mileage or doing more hard workouts, you'll probably suffer from leaden legs at some point as your body works to adapt. Even with steady volume and intensity, an off day is still possible.

SURVIVE IT Rethink your route: a loop of a few kilometres instead of a long out-and-back will keep you from being stranded. Then, slow your pace for a few minutes, walking if need be, before picking it up again. Still bad? Take a gel and a few sips of water – your body will absorb the carbs in just minutes, so you should feel peppier quickly. If you see no improvement after 15 minutes, pack it in or you'll risk injury. If you're training for a race or don't want to skip the run, try again the next day.

LEARN FROM IT Determine why you felt so bad, says Hamilton. Stress, lack of sleep, poor nutrition, impending illness, or dehydration all play into how you feel. If you can't figure it out and you continue having off days, see your doctor to rule out conditions like anaemia or thyroid problems. 



ASK THE SCIENTIST
Ross Tucker

Does every runner improve at the same rate? –

HANNAH, Claremont

Studies that measure how the physiology and biochemistry of fitness and health adapts and improves, in runners embarking on a training programme, have found varying results from person to person: there are responders and non-responders to training.

But a new study offers encouragement to those who feel left behind by those 'lucky' responders. The researchers tracked a group of previously inactive people, over 24 weeks of training. Some of the participants trained at low intensity, some at high intensity, and the researchers also tinkered with training volume.

Over the first 12 weeks there

"...if you test yourself with higher-intensity training, you will improve."

were many non-responders, whose cardiovascular fitness measurements didn't increase by much. But over the next 12 weeks, the group that did more training at a higher intensity managed to achieve 100% success – every single person responded. The groups that did less training, and at a lower intensity, still had a non-responder rate of between one in three and one in six.

The 'unfair' reality is that some people get more from training than others. But the good news is: if you test yourself with higher-intensity training, you will improve.

RW Scientific Editor Dr Ross Tucker has a BSc (Med) (Hons) Exercise Science Degree and PhD from the Sports Science Institute. Visit him at www.sportsscientists.com.

NEED MOTIVATION? Get-going tips from coaches Hamilton and Schultz

MIX IT UP

Going long lets you explore beyond everyday routes, so head for a new-to-you park or neighbourhood. If you're doing a local race, run on the course.

SCHEDULE IT

Instead of 'long run Sunday', plan specifically: 'breakfast, errands, run, nap...' Figure out how to fit your days into your day, and tick them off like a (fun) to-do.

TREAT YOURSELF

A cooked breakfast sounds good, right? Or a movie matinee? With something enjoyable, yummy, or relaxing waiting for you, you'll get out the door faster.

GRAB A BUD

Arrange to meet a friend, or a few of them, at a specific time. The accountability can stop the habit of stalling until you run out of daylight and can't go.



PERSPIRATION NATION

Yes, it's hot and humid – but you can still run comfortably.



Summer's blooming flowers, ample daylight, and abundance of other people out exercising make it a wonderful running season. However, sunshine and heat can be uncomfortable and sometimes even dangerous for athletes. Here are some common challenges you may encounter in the coming months. Learn to deal with them to run strong – and safe – all summer long.

I get thirsty while I run.


Plan routes that pass water fountains, stash some bottles before your run, or bring your own H₂O. Several companies make products to help you carry water; ask a salesperson at your local running store which is best for you, given how long you usually run.

My sweaty clothing rubs my skin raw. If you wear

cotton, try clothing made of sweat-wicking materials that draw moisture away from the skin. If you're still chafing, it might be caused by two areas of skin rubbing together. Apply an anti-chafing balm or petroleum jelly to problem spots before you head out.

Sunscreen gets in my eyes and burns. Don't let this stop you from wearing it – apply a

broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15 to exposed skin before all runs between dawn and dusk. To avoid the sting, shield your forehead and eyes with sunglasses and a visor, and use sunscreen only below those areas.

I'm sweating before I even start walking. Every runner's heat tolerance varies, but many need to avoid intense activity when it's above 24 to 27 degrees. You can still exercise when it's a little warmer; just slow down 15 seconds per kilometre for every 2 or 3 degrees above 13°C. 

You Asked Me **Jeff answers** **your questions.**

How can I tell if I'm having a dangerous reaction to heat?

If you're having hot or cold flashes, you've stopped sweating, or you're feeling dizzy or unable to concentrate, then stop running, seek a cool environment, and get medical help.

What workouts can I do in the pool on really hot days?

Try using a flotation belt to run in the deep end. Move your legs in the same range of motion, and replicate the effort you'd be expending if you were doing the same workout on solid ground.

Fact or Fiction **As long as I go slowly enough, I can run outdoors no matter how hot it is.**

FICTION

Heat can be dangerous, and is a leading cause of serious medical problems and deaths in races. Even when running slowly but continuously on hot days, you risk heat illness – which can be reduced (but not eliminated) by frequent walk breaks. Have an indoor exercise option so you don't have to miss workouts due to heat.

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THE FAST LANE

TRAINING ADVICE FOR PEAK PERFORMANCE

BY ALEX HUTCHINSON




Sticking close together helped leaders deal with 65-km/h gusts at the 2014 New York City Marathon.

of lingering in no man's land. Conversely, if you're getting dropped by your pack, it's very easy to become disheartened. Instead, slow a little, regroup, and prepare mentally to latch onto the next pack that comes up behind you.

WORST > STARTER PACKS

The worst strategy of all – worse even than running the whole race alone – is to try to stick with a pack that's too fast for you. In Hanley's analysis, those who started with a pack but were dropped before reaching the halfway point of the race slowed down the most as the race progressed. Setting realistic goals will help you avoid this trap, but sometimes the energy of a pack is so contagious that the whole group goes faster than intended – like in the 2013 London Marathon, when a 1:01.34 first half wreaked havoc on the entire lead pack. Check your splits periodically to make sure your pack-mates aren't getting carried away.

ALWAYS > PACK TACTICS

Once you've found the right pack, tuck in. The best position aerodynamically is directly behind someone else, within about one metre. (Don't clip the leader's heels.) Top marathoners burn about two per cent of their energy overcoming air resistance even on a calm day, and more on windy days, so positioning does matter. But packs are most effective when everyone shares the pacemaking duties. Think of the other runners in the pack as your teammates, and work together – until the final kays, when all treaties dissolve. 

HACK THE PACK

Racing with a group beats going solo – if you do it right.

➔ In the Tour de France, everyone knows the power of the peloton: the riders in a pack almost always outpace loners. Even though slower speeds in running races mean drafting's benefits are smaller, tucking in can make holding a pace easier, both mentally and physically.

But not just any pack will do. Earlier this year, researcher Brian Hanley published an analysis of the pack-running behaviour of competitors at the IAAF World Half Marathon Championships between 2007 and 2014. By studying how packs formed and splintered, he was able to determine which strategies worked best – and which backfired.

BEST > PERSISTENT PACKS

The most successful runners – those who best maintained their pace throughout the race and sped up the most at the

finish – were those who ran with the same group from start to finish. Sometimes the packs consisted of teammates, but often it was rivals of similar

ability. These days, many big races set up pace groups aiming for predetermined goal times; you can also set up your own pack via message boards or social media, or simply look for kindred souls during the early kays of a race. (And it's fine to tuck in behind someone for a few kays – but after that, it's your turn to lead.)

GOOD > NOMADIC PACKS

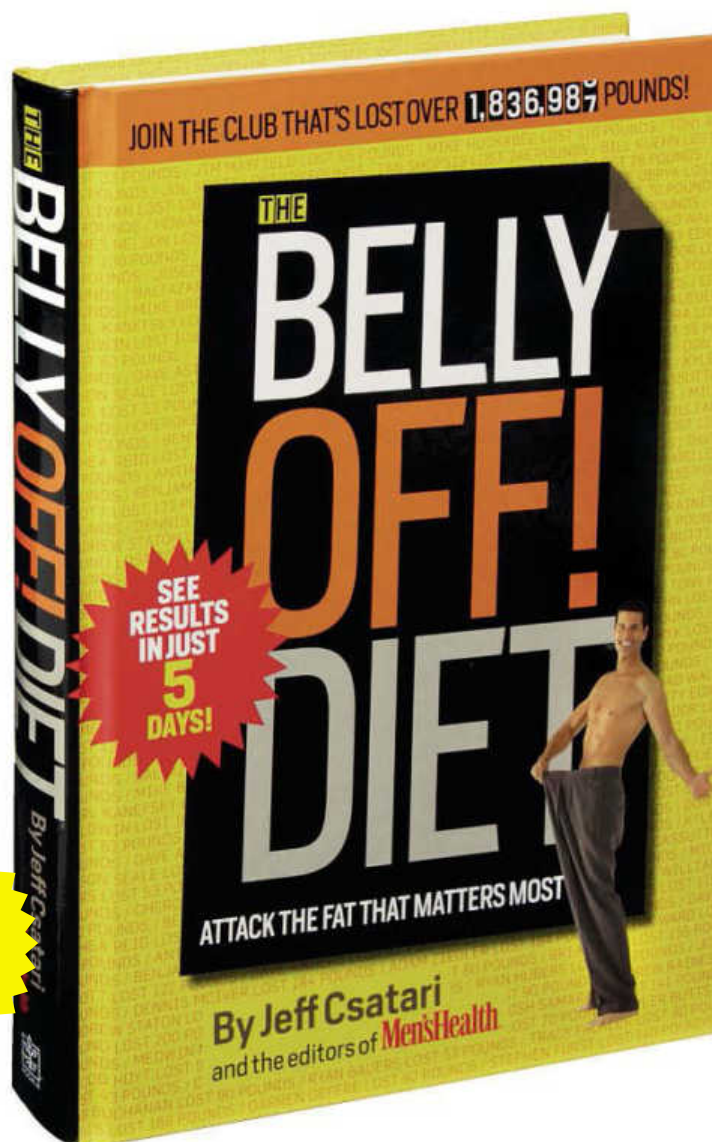
The next-best outcomes came from those who ran most of the race with other runners – but not always the same ones. If you realise that you're stronger than the other runners in your pack, look up the road to see if there's another group you could join. Then, make a decisive move to catch them instead

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RACE PREP

PLAN OF CUTBACK

Taper strategically to ace your half or full marathon.

By A.C. Shilton

EVEN IF the only thing that gets you through peak training for a big event is using the mantra *I'm tapering soon*, once it's time to cut back, you may end up feeling restless. But running less is crucial – it gives your muscles time to repair fully, your body time to restock its energy stores, and your mind a break from hard training, says Jim McGehee, a running coach with a background in exercise physiology.

Most marathon tapers last three weeks, but some athletes need just two. Half marathoners should taper for 10 to 14 days. If it's your first try at a distance, err on the side of too much taper.

Here's how to cut back smartly before your big day. Do it right and you'll start the race mentally and physically refreshed, and even fitter than you were during your hardest weeks. Believe us.

3

WEEKS OUT

McGehee has his marathoners **cut their mileage by about 25 per cent** this week. "But I mostly cut back on their long runs and the distance of their daily runs rather than cutting out entire days," he says. This keeps you on a regular running schedule and eliminates the problem of having lots of new-found free time in which to worry about race day.



DON'T FORGET TO Keep some faster running. McGehee schedules at least one run with race-pace or faster kays. "Your legs need to keep that fast turnover," he says – because these kays will help your body remember a quicker rhythm when the gun goes off.

2

WEEKS OUT

Bobby Holcombe, a coach and former pro runner, tells his runners to **cut their mileage by another 15 to 25 per cent** with two weeks to go. (If you're starting your taper now, reduce volume by 30 to 40 per cent.) Again, the runs should be shorter, but not all easier – Holcombe likes mile (1 600m) repeats at marathon pace, with the last rep slightly faster.

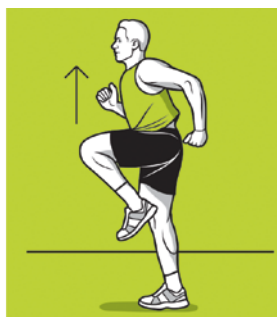


DON'T FORGET TO Eat. Often athletes feel that because they're running fewer kays they need to consume drastically fewer kilojoules, but you need to fuel adequately for race day, Holcombe says. Prioritise healthy carbs from fruits, veggies, and whole grains.

1

WEEK OUT

"I don't worry about mileage at all the last week," says McGehee. Do a few 25- to 30-minute runs. Three or four days before your event, get in **one last workout with race-pace running**, but keep it short. McGehee gets his athletes to do short intervals on the road, with more recovery than work. "I don't want them to get lazy with their cadence," he says.



DON'T FORGET TO Keep doing the range-of-motion drills you did throughout training. McGehee encourages the continuation of any flexibility exercises – like high-knees drills or side-shuffling steps – to keep the joints open and the muscles loose.



ASK THE COACH Lindsey Parry

I have lots of spare time to train during the holidays. How can I make the most of it? – CLAIRE, Sunnydale

You can – and should – do more than usual during the holiday season, because you have extra downtime to recover better from the training you're doing.

Depending on what event you're preparing for, focus either on increasing your endurance, or working on speed. This could mean adding one extra day to your training schedule, or if you already train five days a week, adjusting one or two of your runs.

"...you have extra downtime to recover better..."

The rules:

1. Don't increase mileage by much more than 10% per week.
2. Ensure your longest run of the week makes up no more than 30% of your week.
3. Keep your high-intensity running at 10% of your total volume.

Don't increase your training load dramatically during the holidays. It could lead to injury and/or illness, because your body isn't prepared for it. And even if you get through unscathed – and depending on when your major event is – you won't necessarily be able to sustain such a high level of training, or capitalise on extra training sessions.

Lindsey Parry is a qualified biokineticist, Two Oceans and Comrades silver medallist and 2:47 marathoner. Email him at lindsey@hpc.co.za.

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ASK THE EXPERTS

Is skipping good for runners?

Yes – by making your toe-off more explosive, skipping helps develop a longer, quicker stride. It also requires good form that mimics good running form. Do sets of 30-second reps, 60 seconds rest; build from three to six sets. – *Brett Stewart co-wrote Ultimate Jump Rope Workouts (7weekstofitness.com).*

I'm still sore three days after a long run. Is that okay?

If it's not sharp, localised pain – which could indicate an injury – it's probably just delayed-onset muscle soreness, which can peak two days after a hard workout and linger even longer. However, spend the next day or two recovering with short, slow runs, easy swimming or cycling sessions, or rest. Applying heat, stretching post-exercise, getting a light massage, and wearing compression socks may also help ease soreness. – *Tracy Golder is a marathoner and online coach (hummingbirdrunning.weebly.com).*


How can I loosen up to run the day after a long trip?

Start by rolling your legs, glutes, and back with a foam roller to find stiff spots. Use your body weight to apply pressure at each spot for one minute, allowing those muscles to relax. Next, use leg swings, lunges with trunk rotation, kneeling hip-flexor stretches, and quad stretches to stretch the hamstrings and hip flexors, which tighten with sitting. Then, start your run at a slower pace than usual. – *Maria Poranski, a running coach and certified personal trainer, is an accomplished marathon runner.*

Stay light on your toes, and keep your spine straight, head up, and eyes forward.

The Explainer

Which is most important for running: heart, lungs, or legs?

Exercise physiologists have debated this for years. The answer is fuzzy because all three work in concert, says Matt Woods, a 1:09 half marathoner, running coach, and exercise physiologist who has tested hundreds of runners at SportsLab of Real Fitness. “The consensus is that the main limiting factor is the ability of your heart and lungs (the engine) to deliver oxygen (the fuel) to your working muscles (the wheels). But it doesn’t matter how much oxygen is delivered if your muscles aren’t well adapted to using it.” New runners are limited more by muscle inadequacy because their running-specific muscles, capillaries (the pathways to muscle cells), and mitochondria (the parts of cells that produce energy) haven’t fully developed. More experienced runners appear to be limited more by heart and lung capacity. 



FUEL

QUICK BITES

MAKE A GOOD TOAST

Delicious toppings for a post-run snack are the best thing since... well, sliced bread.

By Matthew Kadey, registered dietitian

SALMON SALAD

Studies show that the omega-3 fats in salmon can reduce muscle soreness and improve mood in athletes.

MIX 115 grams cream cheese, 2 Tbsp. chopped dill, 1 tsp. horseradish, and ½ tsp. lemon zest. Spread 1/4 of mix on 1 slice rye toast. Top with baby spinach and cucumber

PB & HOMEMADE J

Chia seeds create a jam rich in fibre, which may cut mortality risk from various diseases, reports a 2014 study.

HEAT 1½ cups raspberries in a pot for 5 minutes. Add 2 Tbsp. chia, plus a squeeze of honey and lemon; heat 2 minutes. Mash, then cool. Top 1 slice whole-wheat toast with peanut butter and jam.

TOMATO EGG

Sun-dried tomatoes supply lycopene, which may protect runners' skin from UV rays. Eggs provide brain-boosting choline and protein.

MIX 2½ Tbsp. sun-dried tomato spread and 1½ Tbsp. sour cream. Spread on 1 slice sourdough toast. Top with 1 hard-boiled egg, 1 tsp. capers, and fresh dill garnish.

BLUEBERRY CHEESECAKE

Blueberries are rich in a chemical that may help reduce body fat storage, while almond butter helps keep your energy on an even keel.

STIR ½ cup blueberries, 1/3 cup ricotta, ½ Tbsp. honey, ½ tsp. vanilla, and 1/4 tsp. orange zest. Top 1 slice whole-grain toast with almond butter, ½ the fruit mix, and mint.

SMOKY AVOCADO BEAN

The healthy fat in avo can tame post-meal hunger, according to a 2013 *Nutrition Journal* study.

MIX 1 mashed avocado, 1 crushed garlic clove, 1 tsp. crushed mild/smoked chilli pepper, juice of ½ lime, and salt. Spread on 1 slice sprouted toast. Top with black beans, red onion, mango, and coriander (dhania).

CHICKEN PESTO

In addition to packing protein, chicken contains niacin, a B vitamin that converts food into the energy you use to run hard.

SPREAD 1 Tbsp. pesto on 1 slice sprouted toast. Top with 2 slices roasted red pepper, 1/4 cup shredded cooked chicken, 2 Tbsp. sliced olives, and a scattering of rocket.

Choose loaves labelled '100% whole grain', including wholewheat, rye, and sprouted breads.



FUEL

SECOND SITTING!

Repurpose your festive leftovers into delicious, runner-friendly fare.

By Matthew Kadey, registered dietician

LEFTOVERS TURKEY AND CRANBERRY SAUCE

TURN THEM INTO **Turkey Salad with Cranberry Vinaigrette**

Cranberries provide proanthocyanidin antioxidants that protect your cardiovascular system by reducing inflammation, cholesterol levels, and artery stiffness.

Makes 4 servings

- ½ cup cranberry sauce
- 3 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. cider vinegar
- 2 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp. fresh thyme
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- 8 cups (225g) baby kale
- 2 medium carrots, peeled and shredded
- 2 medium parsnips, peeled and shredded
- 2 cups (285g) diced cooked turkey meat
- 2 pears, thinly sliced
- 115 grams soft goat's cheese, crumbled
- ¼ cup pecan halves, chopped

Whisk together cranberry sauce, olive oil, cider vinegar, mustard, thyme, garlic, salt, and pepper. In a large bowl, toss the kale (or spinach), carrots, parsnips, and turkey with enough dressing to coat the greens. Divide among 4 plates and top with the pears, goat's cheese, and pecans. Drizzle the remaining dressing over the salads.

LEFTOVERS CHEESE AND DRIED FRUIT

TURN THEM INTO **Fancy Fig and Brie Grilled Cheese**

Softer cheeses, like Brie, melt beautifully when grilled, while dried figs provide notable amounts of fibre, vitamin K, and bone-building calcium. Add turkey for a dose of selenium, which may help raise your mood.

Makes 4 servings

- ¾ cup (115g) dried figs, stems removed
- ¾ cup apple cider
- 1 tsp. dried thyme
- Pinch of salt
- 8 slices whole-grain bread
- 115 grams brie cheese, rind removed
- 2 cups shredded turkey
- 2 cups baby spinach
- 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter

Place figs, apple cider, thyme, and salt in a saucepan. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for 20 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool for 15 minutes. Blend mixture into a chunky paste. Spread fig paste on each slice of bread. Among 4 slices divide the cheese, turkey, and spinach and top with the other slices of bread.

Heat ½ Tbsp. butter in a skillet over medium heat. Cook sandwich until cheese is melted and bread is golden brown, about 3 minutes per side. Repeat with the remaining butter and sandwiches.



Turkey Salad with Cranberry Vinaigrette

Dark cuts of turkey are more flavourful than white, contain only an extra couple of grams of fat, and provide more zinc and iron.



Fig and Brie Grilled Cheese



Ham and Brussels Sprouts Frittata

LEFTOVERS HAM AND BRUSSELS SPROUTS

TURN THEM INTO **Anytime Frittata**

Ham adds a boost of lean protein for muscle recovery.

Makes 6 servings

- 6 large eggs
- 2 large egg whites
- 1/3 cup low-fat milk
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan
- 2 tsp. fresh thyme
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper
- 1/2 tsp. paprika (optional)
- 1 Tbsp. canola oil
- 3 cups sliced raw Brussels sprouts
- 2 cups sliced mushrooms
- 2 shallots, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 cups diced cooked ham

Heat oven to 200°C. Whisk together eggs, whites, and milk. In a large bowl, stir in cheese, thyme, pepper, and paprika (if using).

Heat oil in a 25cm ovenproof skillet over medium heat. Add Brussels sprouts, mushrooms, shallots, and garlic; cook until vegetables are tender, about 5 minutes. Stir in ham and pour egg mixture into pan. Cook 3 minutes, without stirring.

Transfer skillet to oven and bake until the egg is set in the middle, about 12 minutes.

LEFTOVERS SQUASH

TURN IT INTO **Pasta with Squash and Coconut Sauce**

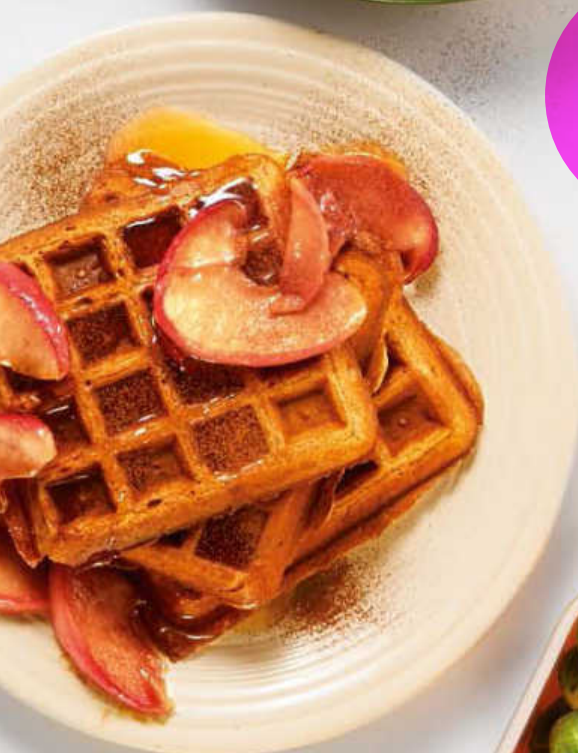
Pureed butternut squash creates a velvety sauce packed with beta-carotene, which may reduce the risk for developing diabetes.

Makes 6 servings

- 2 cups cooked butternut
- 1 cup light coconut milk
- 2 tsp. curry powder
- 2 tsp. chopped fresh peeled ginger
- 3/4 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. chili powder
- 350 grams fusilli or rotini pasta

Sweet Potato Waffles with Maple-Braised Apples

Prepare and chill the batter a day in advance. Let it sit at room temperature for 30 minutes before using.



- 2 tsp. canola oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 cups frozen peas
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1/3 cup dry-roasted, salted cashews, chopped
- 1/4 cup coriander (dhania), chopped
- Ground black pepper
- 1 lime, cut into 6 wedges

Blend butternut squash, coconut milk, curry powder, ginger, salt, and chili powder until smooth. Cook pasta, reserving 2/3 cup cooking water. Heat oil and cook onion until softened. Stir in peas and garlic. Add butternut sauce and simmer. Stir in pasta, cashews, and reserved cooking water. Serve with coriander, pepper, and lime.

LEFTOVERS SWEET POTATOES AND APPLES

TURN THEM INTO **Yummy Waffles**

Orange spuds provide vitamin A for immune system health.

Makes about 10 waffles

- 2 cups oat flour
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 1/2 tsp. + 1/4 tsp. cinnamon
- 3/4 tsp. baking soda
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 1 1/4 cups low-fat milk
- 1/2 cup plain yoghurt
- 1 cup mashed sweet potato
- 1/3 cup applesauce
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 1 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 2 large apples, cored and thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup pure maple syrup

Stir together oat flour, baking powder, 1 1/2 tsp. cinnamon, baking soda, and salt. In a separate bowl, whisk milk, yoghurt, sweet potato, applesauce, eggs, and vanilla. Add wet ingredients to dry; mix gently. Place 1/2 cup batter into greased waffle iron and cook until set; repeat. Melt butter in pan. Stir in apples, maple syrup, and 1/4 tsp. cinnamon. Cook until apples are tender. Serve apples on top of waffles.



FRIDGE WISDOM

NUTRITION ADVICE FOR HEALTHY, HUNGRY RUNNERS

BY DR LIZ APPEGATE



Studies show that the protein and carbohydrates found naturally in milk aid in muscle repair and recovery.

NEWS YOU CAN CONSUME

The latest nutrition research may help you run faster, lose weight, and speed recovery.

DRINK MILK, FEEL FULL

In a recent study from the UK, runners drank 600ml of fat-free milk post-long run, or a carb drink with an equal number of kilojoules. The milk group ate 10 per cent fewer kilojoules at their next meal, compared with those who'd had the carb drink. Researchers theorise that milk protein may curb appetite. **MAKE IT WORK** Trying to lose weight? Post-run, reach for milk rather than a sports drink.

STICK WITH WHEAT

For a week, healthy, non-celiac cyclists (at the Canadian Sport Institute) followed a gluten-free diet – supplemented with an energy bar that contained gluten, or one without. Researchers found no differences – in

cycling performance or in wellness evaluations – between the groups.

MAKE IT WORK If you feel gluten makes you sick, see a specialist. Otherwise, get your carbs through a variety of sources.

DON'T CUT KILOJOULES

If you've ever tried to lose weight, you've probably cut kilojoules. Bad move, according to researchers from Appalachian State University. They found that reducing kilojoule intake by 25 per cent for just one day lowers your resting metabolic rate (the number of kilojoules your body burns at rest) by six per cent.

MAKE IT WORK To shed kilos, increase your exercise, which will burn kilojoules without negatively affecting your RMR.

41

Percentage of healthy, non-celiac athletes who have tried following a gluten-free diet, according to one study.

105

Average number of kilojoules burned running one mile (1600m) (the exact amount ranges from 90 to 120, depending on your size and speed), making the sport ideal for weight loss.

50

Kilojoules in 250ml of sports drink. For a performance boost minus the kilojoules, sip the drink, but don't swallow – spit it out. (Watch out for fellow runners.)



POP A BEETROOT JUICE PILL

Betalains give beetroot its red colour, and according to a study from the University of California Davis, US, the compounds may also boost performance. After taking a betalain supplement every day for a week, runners had lower heart rates and perceived levels of exertion during a warm-up, compared with a control group – and they ran faster 5-Ks.

MAKE IT WORK During intense training, consider taking 100mg of purified betalain daily.




SIP OVER 60

Past studies show that when young athletes swish sports drink in their mouth (and then spit it out), it can help them run further. Simply tasting carbs may stimulate the

body to push harder. But does it work for older athletes? Researchers from Brazil made participants (average age 63) run hard for one hour. The runners rinsed

their mouths with a sports drink or placebo at the start and halfway through the run. Compared with the placebo group, the sports-drink group ran about one kilometre

further – without raising their average heart rate or perceived exertion level. **MAKE IT WORK** Whatever your age, give mouth rinsing a try for races around an hour. 

QUICK BITES

GREEK CURRENCY

Savoury or sweet mix-ins punch up the nutritional profile of Greek yoghurt. Use 3/4 cup plain, preferably low-fat.

By Matthew Kadey, registered dietician

BLACK FOREST

The antioxidant payload from dark chocolate and cherries in this dessert bowl may help lessen oxidative damage caused by high-intensity exercise. **STIR** in 28 grams melted dark chocolate. Top with 1/2 cup pitted, halved cherries and a sprinkle of unsweetened coconut flakes.

CURRY MANGO

This sweet-and-savoury combo provides cholesterol-lowering monounsaturated fat. Cashews offer magnesium, which improves muscle strength. **STIR** in 1 1/2 teaspoons curry powder and pinch of cayenne. Top with 1/2 cup diced mango, 1/4 avocado, chopped cashews, and lime zest.

ROASTED GRAPE

Roasting boosts grapes' natural sweetness. One study found that nutrient-dense almonds can help improve muscular endurance. **STIR** in 1 teaspoon honey. Top with 3/4 cup roasted grapes, 2 tablespoons chopped almonds, and 1 teaspoon chopped fresh rosemary.

BALSAMIC BERRY

A little balsamic glaze adds sweetness without too much sugar. The vitamin C in strawberries may improve exercise performance. **STIR** in 2 teaspoons each balsamic glaze and honey, plus a sprinkle of lemon zest and cinnamon. Top with sliced strawberries, pistachios, and sliced basil.

LEMONY BEETROOT

Beetroot is a leading source of nitrates, compounds that have been shown to improve exercise endurance. Walnuts provide heart-healthy omega-3 fats. **STIR** in 1/2 cup diced cooked beetroot, 2 teaspoons chopped dill, sprinkle of lemon zest, pinch of salt. Top with chopped walnuts.

JAVA FIG

The centre of the cocoa bean, cacao nibs pack crunch, cocoa flavour, and disease-fighting antioxidants. **STIR** in 1/4 cup coffee-fig puree (soak 1/4 cup dried figs in 1/4 cup coffee for 2 hours; add 1/2 teaspoon orange zest and 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract; blend). Sprinkle with cacao nibs.

Black Forest

Curry Mango

Made by straining away liquid, Greek yoghurt contains two to three times as much protein as traditional types.

Balsamic Berry

Roasted Grape

Lemony Beetroot

Java Fig

Yoghurt is full of probiotics - bacteria that can help athletes fight off infections and improve gut health.



MIND+BODY

GET BETTER, STAY BETTER

How to recover from (and/or prevent) common running injuries

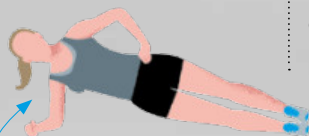
By Beth Dreher

IF YOU SUFFER an injury, your doctor may recommend cutting back on mileage or even taking a complete break from running. While downtime gives you a chance to mend, rest shouldn't be the only part of your recovery plan. "If injured runners don't address muscle weaknesses and faulty mechanics, they're almost guaranteed to reinjure," says Dr Colleen Brough, assistant professor on the physical therapy programme at Columbia University in the US. Here, running injury specialists outline how to put common injuries to rest – for good. Follow the 'active recovery' advice as you ease in and build up your mileage. When you're back at full operating speed, add the 'relapse prevention' tip to stay healthy.

Kinesiology tape can support and safeguard injury-prone muscles, tendons, and ligaments while you run. For a demo of how to apply it, see runnersworld.co.za/howtotape

ILIOTIBIAL-BAND SYNDROME

ACTIVE RECOVERY When running, **increase the width of your steps by a few centimetres** to reduce friction between IT band and thighbone, says Dr Reed Ferber, director of the Running Injury Clinic in Calgary, Canada.



RELAPSE PREVENTION

Side planks strengthen the muscles on the outside of the hips.

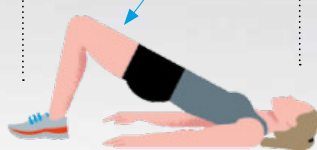
RUNNER BEWARE **Skip the hills.** On inclines, the knee stays bent longer, which increases tension in the IT band, Ferber says. Avoid running circles in the same direction on a track, and roads with high cambers.

HAMSTRING STRAIN

ACTIVE RECOVERY

Exercises such as planks, clamshells, and **bridges** strengthen weak glutes and hips, common culprits for hamstring strains. It may be helpful to work on agility (check out runnersworld.co.za/carioca).

In a University of Wisconsin study, runners with acute hamstring strains who completed a rehab plan that included agility work recovered faster and were less likely to be reinjured than those who didn't work on their agility.



RELAPSE PREVENTION

Do bridge walkouts (with hips raised, walk your feet out, alternating right and left steps; the straighter the legs, the harder it is). This strengthens the hamstring as it's lengthening, which is consistent with the action of the muscle during running.

RUNNER BEWARE **Avoid speedwork until your pain is completely gone.**

"The hamstring most commonly gets injured when the muscle is lengthened quickly, as it is when sprinting," Brough says.

MEDIAL TIBIAL STRESS SYNDROME (Shin Splints)



ACTIVE RECOVERY **Increase the number of steps you take per minute by five to 10 per cent.**

Count your steps, do the maths, then try & find songs that are a slightly higher number of beats per minute. Riding a **stationary bike** can help, too. "Being on an indoor bike where you don't have to worry about traffic can help you get a feel for a high cadence, which you can carry over to running," Brough says.

"On the bike, focus on activating the transversus abdominis of the abdominals and the gluteus maximus, which help stabilise the pelvis and improve running mechanics."

RELAPSE PREVENTION

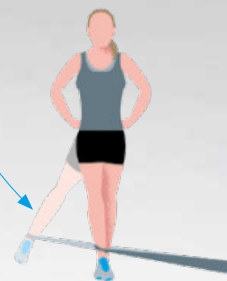
Runners who land with an exaggerated heel strike are most likely to suffer from shin splints. Increasing your running cadence will lead to a shorter stride length.

RUNNER BEWARE "If you return to running too quickly, this injury can quickly turn into a stress fracture," Brough says. Follow each running day with two rest or cross-training days.

PATELLO-FEMORAL PAIN SYNDROME (Runner's Knee)

ACTIVE RECOVERY

"Hip and core strength is essential to eliminating knee pain," says Ferber, whose research on the topic was published recently in the *Journal of Athletic Training*. Three times a week, do three sets of 10 reps of each of these exercises: **standing hip abduction**, standing hip external rotation, and standing hip internal rotation (get instructions for these moves at runnersworld.co.za/stronghips).



RELAPSE PREVENTION

Walk backwards uphill or on a treadmill set to five per cent incline (hold the handrails to avoid tripping). This isolates the muscles on the front of your thighs that help keep the kneecap in proper alignment. "While targeting the hips is key, research still tells us that quad strengthening is an important part of 'runner's knee' recovery," Ferber says.

RUNNER BEWARE While you're in pain, avoid running downhill. "Pounding down hills increases the force on the knee joint, and slows recovery."

PLANTAR FASCIITIS

ACTIVE RECOVERY Use **over-the-counter orthotics in your shoes** as you rebuild mileage. "Most athletes I've treated with plantar fasciitis have recovered more quickly with orthotics," says Ferber. Once the pain has subsided, remove the inserts. Use a foam roller before running to loosen calves and Achilles tendons. Roll the injured foot over a frozen water bottle for one minute four to six times a day to reduce swelling.

RELAPSE PREVENTION

Strengthen the calf muscles that support the tissue on the bottom of the foot with **heel raises**. Work up to three sets of 20 reps four days a week. "Always do this exercise after a run or workout," Ferber says. "Doing it before will put increased strain on the plantar fascia."



RUNNER BEWARE Don't walk around barefoot, which can further strain injured tissue, Ferber says. And throughout the day, opt for supportive shoes over flip-flops or high heels.

POSITION STATEMENT

Six exercises to improve running form

GOOD RUNNING FORM happens on the roads, of course. But there are simple exercises you can do before and after you run to improve body awareness, strength, and flexibility that will carry over to a smooth, efficient running stride. Target your glutes, hips, and arms with these pre- and post-run moves to make running feel easy and effortless. — SAGE ROUNTREE, author of *The Runner's Guide To Yoga*



Sinking into this glute stretch also promotes balance, but hold onto something if you're feeling shaky.

GLUTES

The glute muscles generate the force that enables you to run. If they are not firing properly, other muscles will pitch in. But over kilometres and kilometres, those compensating muscles can become overloaded, exhausted, and, eventually, injured.



BEFORE YOU RUN Activate your glutes by lifting one leg out to the side. 'Draw' soccer-ball-sized circles with that leg, feeling your glutes engage. Do 10 circles in each direction with each leg.



AFTER YOU RUN Release tension that accumulates in your glutes by crossing one ankle above the opposite knee and sit your hips back and down until you feel a release. Hold for 10 breaths and switch sides.

HIPS

Good running posture is less about maintaining a stiff, rigid spine and more about pelvis positioning. When you run, your pelvis should be neutral – not tilted forward or backward – so it doesn't interfere with the functionality of attaching muscles.



BEFORE YOU RUN Alternate between lifting your chest and tailbone (left) and rounding your back and dropping your pelvis (right). Try to find a neutral point between these; that's the pelvis position you want.



AFTER YOU RUN A strong core helps maintain a neutral pelvis. Lie down and lift your legs. Lower your legs towards the ground while keeping your pelvis level. Bring your legs back up. Repeat 10 times.

ARMS

If you stretch at all, you focus largely on your legs; your upper body is probably neglected. But for a powerful running stride, your entire body needs to be working in unison. A fluid, smooth arm motion carries over to an efficient stride.



BEFORE YOU RUN Lift your arms out to your sides, at shoulder height with your elbows bent upward. Keep your palms facing inward towards your head. Press your elbows back and lift your chest.



AFTER YOU RUN Recline in a supported back bend over a foam roller or a rolled blanket placed vertically up your spine. Extend your arms into a T, and relax and breathe for a few minutes.

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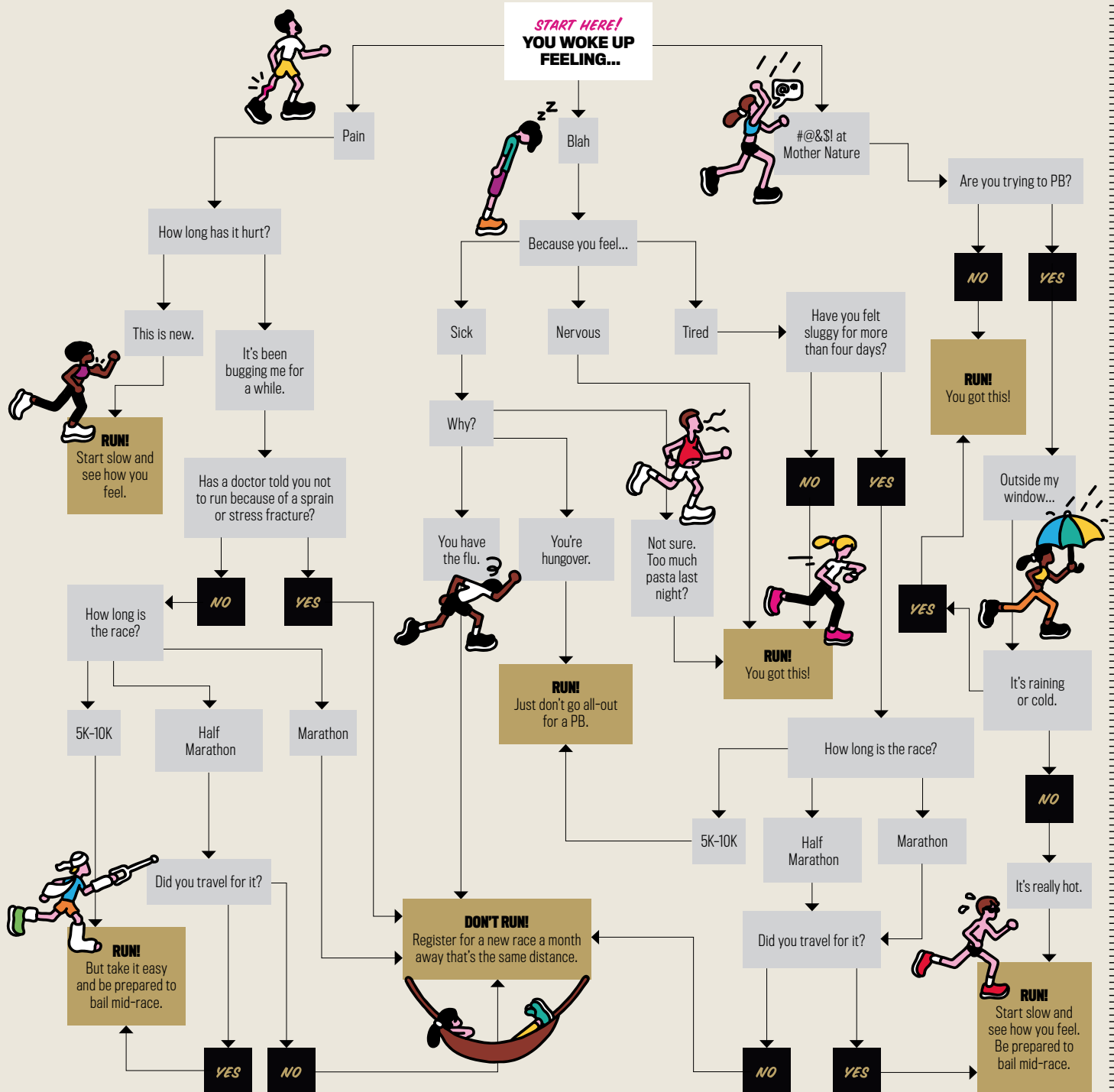
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SHOULD YOU RACE TODAY?

You don't feel so good. Here's how to decide whether to sit it out or gut it out.

By Liz Plosser



Sources: Thomas Schwartz, exercise physiologist and coach; Dr Jordan Metzl, sports-medicine doctor at the Hospital for Special Surgery in New York.

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GT 2000 4
GT 1000 4
Gel Kayano 22
Gel Nimbus 17
Gel Fuji Pro
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Gel DS Trainer 20
Gel DS Trainer 20 NC

SAVE R400

SAVE R300

SAVE R300

Stability R 1849
Stability R 1449
Stability R 2249
Cushion R 2049
Trail R 1649
Trail R 1449
Stability R 1549
Lyte Stability R 1349
Lyte Cushion R 1349

Gel Fortify
Gel Hyperspeed 6
Gel Fuji Racer 3
Gel Fuji Trabuco 4
Gel Fuji Sensor 3
Gel Cumulus 17
Gel Pulse 7
Gel DS Racer 10
Gel Kinsei 5

SAVE R300

SAVE R400

Motion Control R 1949
Racer R 1149
Racer Trail R 1549
Trail R 1549
Trail R 1849
Cushion R 1749
Cushion R 1349
Racer R 999
Versatile R 1999



SNova Glide 8
adiStar Raven Boost
Ultra Boost
adiZero Boston 5
adiStar Boost ESM

NEW

Cushion R 1649
Trail R 1749
Cushion R 2449
Light Cushion R 1549
Cushion R 2249

SNova Riot 6
Energy Boost 2 ESM
adiZero adios Boost 2
SNova Sequence 8

Trail R 1649
Cushion R 1949
Racer R 1649
Stability R 1749



R860 V6
R1260 V5
R880 V5
R1080 V5

NEW

SAVE R300

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Stability R 2049
Cushion R 1649
Cushion R 1549

Zante
M1500
T1210 V2
Vazee Pace

SAVE R300

SAVE R300

Fresh Foam R 1149
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Trail R 1599
Light Cushion R 1749

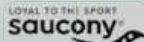


Zoom Structure Triax 19
Zoom Elite 8
Zoom Streak 5
Lunar Glide 7
Zoom Pegasus 32

Stability R 1749
Light Cushion R 1649
Racer R 1149
Stability R 1499
Cushion R 1649

Flyknit Lunar 3
Zoom Vomero 10
Free 5.0
Flyknit Racer

Light Cushion R 1849
Cushion R 1749
Natural R 1149
Racer R 1799



Triumph Iso 2
Hurricane Iso
Powergrid Guide 8
Kinvara 6
Progrid Peregrine 5

SAVE R300

Cushion R 2349
Stability R 2149
Stability R 1699
Natural R 1899
Trail R 2049

Xodus 5.0
Powergrid Ride 8
Progrid Jazz 17
Grid Type A6

Trail R 1899
Cushion R 1849
Cushion R 1449
Racing R 1649



Wave Enigma 5
Wave Sayonara 3
Wave Inspire 11

Cushion R 2399
Light Cushion R 1949
Stability R 2099

Wave Kazan 2
Wave Rider 18

Trail R 1849
Cushion R 2099



Launch 2
Pure Grit 4
Glycerine 13

Light Cushion R 1949
Trail R 1949
Cushion R 2349

Adrenaline GTS 15
Cascadia 10
Ghost 8

SAVE R400

SAVE R300

Stability R 1599
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A CLINICAL APPROACH

TO TREATING THE MOST COMMON
RUNNING-RELATED INJURIES

In this brand-new edition, updated to reflect current practices and research, you'll find everything you need to know about: shoes and shoe selection, 'over the counter' treatments, orthotic techniques and materials, Piriformis Syndrome, chiropractic medicine and acupuncture, stretching techniques, nutrition and supplements, injuries suffered by minimalist runners, and issues specific to women, children and endurance runners.

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Go to FitShop.co.za and click on *Runner's World*

THE BEST

GEAR

OF THE

YEAR

We've tested and rated a lot of running gear this year. Here are 18 top picks that rocked our running world in 2015.



BY **RYAN SCOTT**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY
JAMES GARAGHTY

BEST FOR 5KM



*Introducing
the T7 Racer:
So light, you
can't help but
run faster.*



BROOKS T7 RACER R1 500

This time last year, we tested the Brooks T7 Racer – which means we've had an entire year to enjoy these fast, super-lightweight shoes that are perfect for five-kay speedsters. The heel-to-toe transition is smooth, and a curved platform gives you the sensation you're running faster than usual. It's easy to get into a rhythm with such light and well-designed shoes. The only possible downside is that there is only a men's model. But this shouldn't deter women, because Chrissie Wellington – one of the most impressive Ironman marathon runners around – opts for one and a half sizes below her actual size, and bashes out incredible performances. **182 grams**

Selected Sportsman's Warehouse stores



BEST NEW BRAND:

PEARL AZUMI R1895

It's a brand we've ogled from afar for many years, because in the past only cyclists got to enjoy it. But this year, Pearl Azumi brought their uncomplicated, lightweight, stylish and unique shoes to our shores. At the moment the range is still quite small, but the brand is planning to introduce even more shoe styles – and fashionable running tops and shorts, too.

outpostrunning.co.za



BEST MARATHON AND ULTRA-DISTANCE SHOE:

SAUCONY HURRICANE ISO R2 200

The Hurricane is a traditional, uncomplicated shoe, with ample cushioning where you need it most. It's best suited to the middle-of-the-pack runner who completes a marathon in upwards of four hours. The fit is plush, from heel to toe, and although the stack height is high, so is the forefoot, leaving you with an overall gradient of just under nine millimetres.

300 grams

The Sweat Shop



BEST HALF-MARATHON SHOE:

ASICS NOOSA TRI 10 R1750

It's marketed as a triathlon choice, and named after the famous town of Noosa in Australia, where triathlon is popular. But there's no reason not to love this model purely as a running shoe. From the first version to the latest, we've come to expect simplicity and continuity from this shoe. In the case of the current version, that means 232 grams of average-to-hard cushioning, welded seams on the upper, a mesh forefoot upper for ventilation, and spring-loaded propulsion from an inserted plate that helps add extra speed to your half marathon.

Totalsports



A waterproof upper keeps your feet safe from puddles.

BEST WATERPROOF SHOE:

ADIDAS TERREX BOOST GTX R2 500

The Terrex is less forgiving around the sensitive areas of the ankle, roomy and surprisingly supple at the toe, and then very stiff again on the tread. The drawback is actually the waterproof Gore-Tex upper, which does an excellent job of keeping water out. This doesn't mean you'll escape bone-dry after wading through a stream; but rest assured, on dewy mornings, squelchy socks and prune-like toes will be a thing of trail runs past.

Due South

BEST COMPRESSION:

2XU COMPRESSION PERFORMANCE RUN SOCK R439

This year, we wore these [compression socks](#) more than ever before – mainly after we'd finished running. After a hard training session or a race, compression socks limit the amount of movement in your calves and lower leg muscles when you're active. They also help with blood flow, if you have to sit at your desk for hours on end the day after running hard.

2xu.co.za





BEST NEW DESIGN:

VIVOLICIOUS TECH RACER
R435

Running gear has been shaken up this year. It's no longer just the big brands who release designs that attract millions; local designers are sourcing fabrics and creating exciting new-look exercise gear, with unique cuts, exciting images, and bold creations. Our best of the bunch this year is Vivolicious – and the good news is, you can expect a lot more of this type of running gear next year.

vivolicious.co.za



BEST TRAIL TEE:

ADIDAS TX CLIMBING TEE
R799

The new TX gear from adidas is designed for outdoor running, and that's exactly what it feels like. Although the fabric is light, it has substance and strength greater than your average running top. There's plenty of tech involved: for example, welded panels take the place of seams. Notably, one of a small handful of seams runs right down the centre of the chest, leaving the sides, shoulders and back totally seam-free. A great fit that feels soft, natural and tactile.

Due South



BEST LIGHTWEIGHT JACKET:

SALOMON FAST WING R999

This ultra-thin jacket weighs next to nothing, yet it was hardy enough to survive more than a few close encounters with overgrown fynbos last winter. When the weather's unpredictable, take the Fast Wing along with you, and it will cope with light rain and wind alike. It folds away into an easy-to-carry pouch.

Salomon Stores



BEST WATERPROOF JACKET:

NORTH FACE STORM STOW
R3 099

It's hard to believe that this relatively lightweight and easy-to-run-in jacket is 100% waterproof. But it is – thankfully, because we weren't about to let bad weather stop us from running on the mountains this year. (Best complemented by the adidas Gore-Tex waterproof shoes on p53.)

North Face Stores

BEST TIGHTS:

PUMA ACTV R999

Added kinesiology tape inside these tights elevates their performance – and they look great, too. A low-cut back at the waist may not suit all runners, but it helps isolate muscle groups noticeably during the run. Getting the tights on is a little tricky, as the silicon-like taping grabs the skin. A tip: roll the legs up, as you would if you were putting on stockings – once in position, the tights will stay stuck to your skin.

Puma Stores



Kinesio tape on the inner is unique to the Puma ACTV tights.

BEST TRAVEL BAG

THULE CHASM

With cavity capacity of 27 litres (R1 899) to 130 litres (R2 999), this heavy-duty waterproof bag stores an assortment of running gear, perfect for a weekend away, a multi-day race, or simply meeting up with your buddies for a social run. The thick material holds its shape well, protecting the contents, and it can easily be packed away in the back of your car, or manoeuvred from place to place, should you decide to embark on a more adventurous run.

thule.co.za



*Protects your
gear and packs
away perfectly
in the boot.*

BEST GPS WATCH



Compact and clean, but packed with options.

GARMIN FORERUNNER 620 R5 500

Nowadays, the options for tracking your runs with GPS are simple. Although we gave the FitBit the thumbs up, it lost out to the Forerunner 620, because Garmin have provided what so many of us are looking for these days – analytics. Specifics like ground contact time down to the last millisecond, cadence, vertical oscillation (bounce) and other metrics are all features of this virtual coach. It's highly recommended if you want to continue your running experience after you've taken your shoes off.

Sportsmans Warehouse



BEST INGENUITY:

ADIDAS CLIMACHILL TEE R400

When you pull the T-shirt over your head for the first time, as soon as the small metallic studs touch your neck and upper back you'll feel a sharp, cool sensation, even if conditions are warmer. The 3D-engineered aluminium cooling sphere technology is aimed at maximising surface contact with the skin, to move heat away from the body. Though we didn't test for an actual drop in core body temperature, the mere sensation of cooling was good enough to impress.

adidas Concept Stores



BEST APP:

STRAVA, FREE ON IOS AND ANDROID

Strava gives you huge opportunities to compete against the rest of the world, or even just against yourself, over distances that go way beyond the average race courses and training routes. Pushing from the lamppost to the next bus stop, and then measuring yourself against hundreds of others doing the same section at any given time, is highly motivating.



BEST SPORTS BRA:

PUMA PWR SHAPE R999

A new product on the market for Puma, that unlike some of the other sports bras available has one very specific goal: to eliminate bounce. The cups are moulded for support, and an extra-strong chest strap anchors them down. The bra has generous padding, and the adjustable shoulder straps, designed to fit your individual frame, are great for bounce control.

Puma Stores



BEST EARPHONES:

SKULLCANDY METHOD IN-EAR BUDS R400

Great earphones complement your running apps, enabling you to take incoming calls and listen to motivational tunes on the run. Despite the fact that these yellow Skullcandy earphones don't come in a cordless Bluetooth version, after all the testing was done, they were our go-to choice. The sweat-resistant design and secure inserts help keep the buds firmly in place, and the quality of sound leans towards heavy bass, which helps drown out external noise.

luksbrands.co.za

Snug in-ear fit keeps the buds firmly in place.

BEST HYDRATION PACK:

SALOMON S-LAB ADV SKIN3 R2 999

Some items of gear are worth splurging on. The S-Lab isn't the cheapest, but you'd be hard-pressed to find a more comfortable, up-to-the-task piece of equipment for endurance running on remote trails. The detail of the blue pack is specifically suited to women, with finer adjustments for a snug, individual fit. It will make all the difference to your long run.

Salomon Stores



Women-specific fit makes all the difference on a long run.



FRESH SHOES

MURRAY IN A HURRY

Puma Faas 300 V3
(discontinued);
V4 R1300
218g Puma Stores



South African triathlete **RICHARD MURRAY**, winner of the 2015 Cozumel ITU World Cup in Mexico, can run 10km in under 30 minutes – and that's after a 1.5km swim and 40km cycle (Murray's PB for a 10km run off the bike is 29.25 – Ed). These are the shoes this incredibly strong, fast athlete uses to train in.



BEST FOR LIGHTIES

At only 218 grams, the 300 V3 is lightweight for a training shoe, but the heel is 25.5 millimetres thick, and the forefoot 17 millimetres – ample cushioning for most runners weighing less than 80 kilograms. The 8.5-millimetre profile drop that leaves you with promotes an efficient forefoot strike.

V4

Murray hasn't changed to the Faas V4 yet, though the V3 is no longer available. The only difference is that the upper design has changed a little – the V4 now has a toecap, and is also more reflective.



BUNGEEEEEE!

In triathlon, there's no time to mess around in transition. So to save precious seconds, Murray's replaced his laces with a bright pink (nice choice, fella!) bungee cord. He can slip the shoe on like a slipper, and in a matter of seconds, his feet will be locked down.


NARROW TOE

A seamless upper wrap, with sturdy overlays that one V4 tester said "felt flexible, like a sock", was able to prevent any hotspots, although some testers felt the toe box could be wider.

BLOWN UP

A major contribution to this featherweight, fast shoe is the blown rubber outsole, which still feels more traditional underfoot.

FROM THE START

What Puma got right from the start, with the first version of the Faas 300, is the easy toe-off. The forefoot flex grooves all activate smoothly as they crunch up for a flexible toe-off, and the EverTrack rubber is resistant enough to give sound durability. 



ASK THE GEAR GUY
Ryan Scott

What's the best way to stop my shoelaces from coming undone? – MATT, Mitchells Plain

There is more to a shoelace than just any old piece of string – and unfortunately, not all running shoes come with a decent pair that tie fast and are unlikely to come undone or give you hotspots.

Your best bet is to plump for laces that feel like cotton, as opposed to greasy plastic. A cotton surface interlocks its fibres more effectively. Flat laces also lock up more efficiently than tubular versions, and form a less pronounced node, which helps prevent hotspots.

But the reality is that many running shoes come with the

"...plump for laces that feel like cotton..."

tube variety, and the lace set-up when you buy a shoe is not always the best choice for your foot. To create a personal set-up that's optimal; for you, I suggest taking the laces out, placing your foot inside the shoe, and then threading the laces back in again from scratch.

Technique is important, too (for expert tips, visit runnersworld.co.za/laces). If you want to get away with wearing your shoes and never having to tie your laces at all, look left at the bungee-cord trick elite triathlete Richard Murray employs with his training shoes.

RW Gear Editor Ryan Scott is comfortable running on the road and mountain trails alike, and is seldom seen wearing the same pair of shoes twice.

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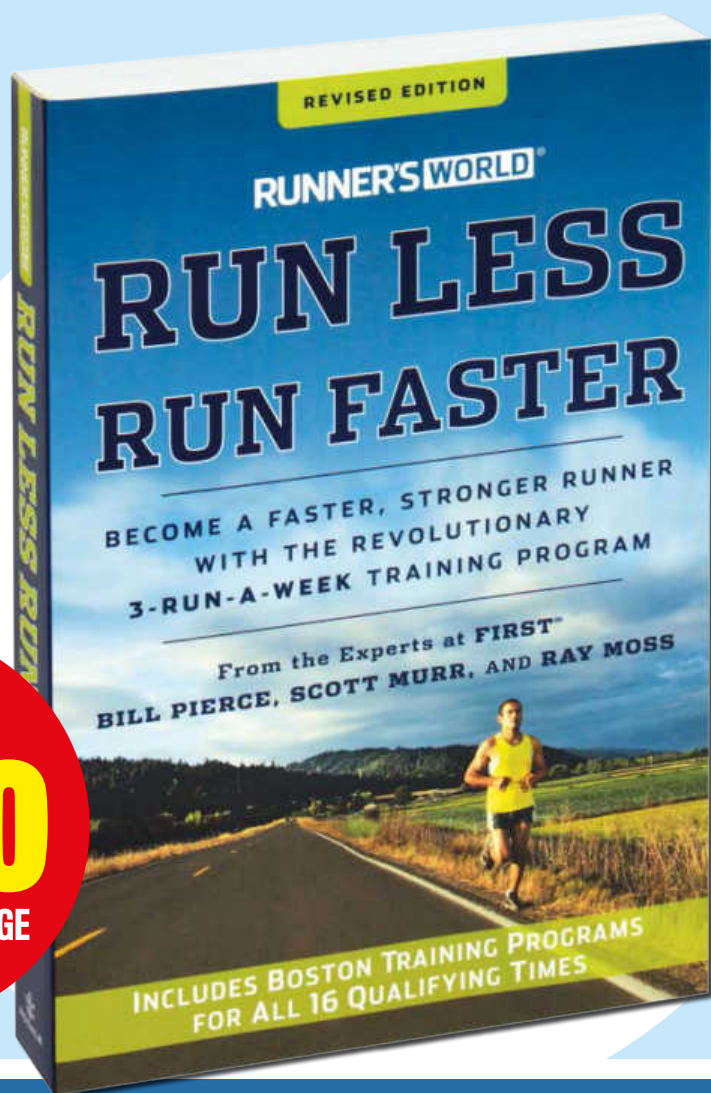
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The intervals and long runs are in the bank. Now you need to psych yourself up to face – and overcome – race-day challenges.

The Racer's Brain

WE RUNNERS, as a group, are generally as tough as bunions. Many of us embrace the black toenails, the sore muscles, the twinges and dings that come with the sport like a badge of honour. Still, every runner I have ever met has a Kryptonite. Despite how many long runs you logged or how fast you ran your repeats, your mind can throw a hurdle your way on race day that can sabotage all your hard work.

As a runner, your biggest asset (or sometimes your greatest enemy) is your brain. You must put in the kilometres and the time to run your best. But I believe physical conditioning alone isn't enough to put wings on your feet. What you think and feel on race day has a huge influence on how well you perform.

Being head psychologist for the Boston Marathon for the past 14 years and having worked with thousands of runners, I can tell you that understanding the mechanisms behind your thoughts and emotions can help you run and race your best. Just as you might have a tight IT band or a tweaky knee to overcome, you probably have a running psych-out that challenges you as well.

On the following pages are four mental obstacles that runners commonly encounter on race day. I've paired each with coping mechanisms – based on brain science and psychological techniques I've used both in my private practice and as part of the medical team of several major road races, including Boston. Soaking up this knowledge will give you the psychological edge to run your best race.

By Dr Jeff Brown
(with Liz Neporent)
Illustrations by Meg Hunt

► PRE-RACE JITTERS

You've selected an event, circled it on the calendar, trained your heart out. Then you get to the start, and you're so nervous you might pass out. Intellectually, you know it's just a local five-kay, but emotionally it feels like an Olympic final.

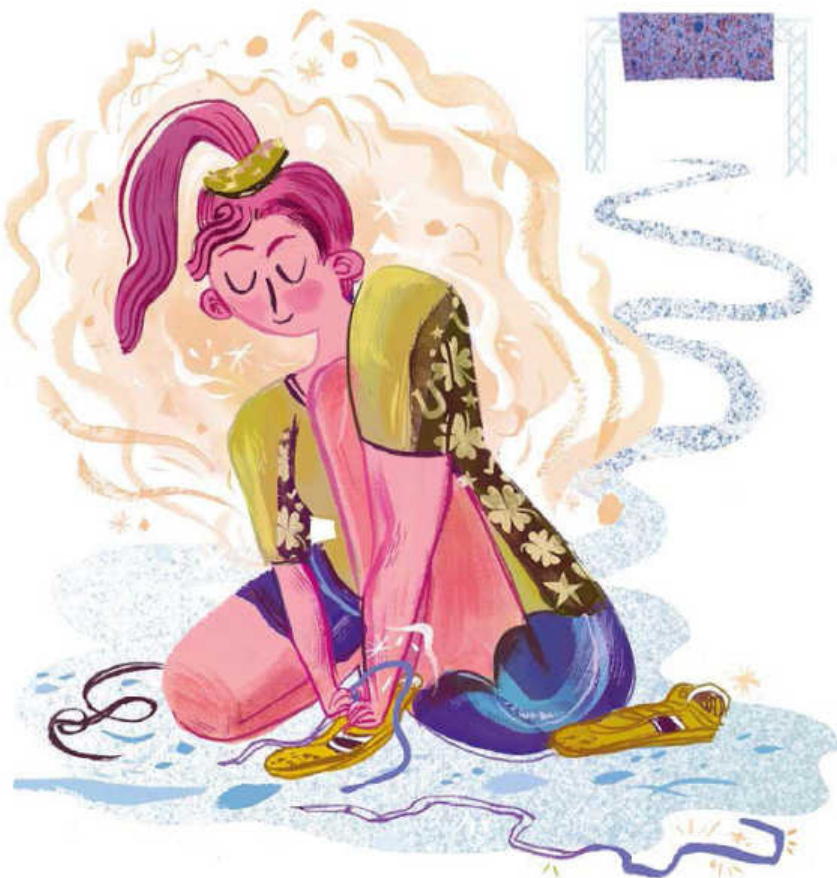
What's Going On

Your sympathetic nervous system (SNS) controls your heart rate, blood pressure, and blood vessels. That heightened, nervous feeling you get just before the gun goes off is caused by the SNS pumping adrenaline and other hormones into the bloodstream. When the agony of waiting is finally over and the race starts, this flood of 'fight or flight' hormones starts your heart racing and causes your blood pressure to climb, leaving you instantly more alert and primed for action – good things. If you're nervous, however, it can be an issue. In an overly agitated state, you'll probably rocket out too fast, leaving nothing for the later part of the race. Pre-race planning helps you strike the right balance between the SNS response and keeping your cool.

How to Cope

Visualise success Before the race, take a few moments to imagine that you just achieved your goal. Picture yourself crossing the finish line. Or looking down at your watch and seeing a new PB time. Hold the mental picture in your head, conjuring up as much detail as you can. Use all your senses. Is there a cheering crowd? How does your body feel? What are your emotions? Building mental familiarity with the race in this way can help you relax – and even boost your performance. Envisioning yourself running well appears to create neural patterns in the brain that nearly match the neural patterns created by actually performing a physical activity. This seems to code the muscle, motor, and behavioural memory of a skill. When combined with enough physical training, visualisation may imprint the skills into your brain and help train your muscles to do exactly what you want them to do. Reaching a goal mentally might help make it easier for you to achieve it physically.

Think positively When you come down with a bad case of the butterflies, it means fear has set in. Fear throws off your pacing, it makes you doubt your strategy, and it messes with your sense of energy management. That's when you start making mistakes. You can manage your anxiety by thinking confidently.



Prepare mantras you can remember and repeat to yourself, such as *I'm strong, I'm fast, my speed will last*. Mantras that can take potential negatives and turn them into positives also work.

Be superstitious On race day, it's always wise to stick to a routine – eat only what you tested in training, for example. But if you have 'lucky' shoelaces or safety pins, by all means use them. Shoelaces and safety pins may not possess magical powers, but people who develop superstitious thoughts and behaviours can use them to help calm their minds. Even though this is illogical thinking, it offers a sense of control, comfort, and meaning. Instead of allowing your anxiety to get the best of you and possibly hamper your performance, the enchanted beliefs and ritualistic behaviours of a superstition help keep you calm and focused, which can positively impact your performance.

► FEAR OF HILLS

To many a runner, hills are the enemy. They are an obstacle standing in the way of fast times. A burden to be endured. A soul-sapping exercise in pain. Remember, I'm the psychologist for the Boston

Marathon, home to Heartbreak Hill, one of the most feared stretches of incline in the world. Over the years, I have watched people of all abilities face Heartbreak with all sorts of emotions and outcomes. I have seen fear, anguish, pain, and rage.

What's Going On

So many times a runner will come to a hill with a preconception of how horrible it will feel to run up it. Those negative feelings form a feedback loop in the brain, stoking your hatred of hills even more. When you come to the base of a hill with thoughts like that in your head, you set yourself up for a miserable experience.

How to Cope

Love them Instead of cursing a hill before you even climb it, try convincing yourself how much you love it. Really. Tell yourself that hills are the greatest thing ever. They make you stronger. They make you tougher. They give you amazing glutes. Tell yourself you're the little engine that could, that slow and steady wins the race, that what goes up must come down – whatever cliché helps you embrace the climb. After a while, this new thought pattern – even if it seems far-fetched – will evolve into an actual belief.

Use your imagination Mental imagery can help you conquer climbs. One runner

told me she sights something along the edge of the road, such as a tree or a car, then throws a mental rope around it that she imagines she can use to pull herself upward. Another runner told me he pretends he is being carried up the hill by a winged horse. As you approach a hill, picture yourself cresting it and gliding down it. Staying calm and positive in the face of a monster incline will help you conserve energy, energy that will help make the actual physical climb easier.

Tune In – or out Some runners dissociate by going to their happy place to try and forget they are working so hard. Other runners take the exact opposite tack: they own their pain with a sort of ‘hurts so good’ attitude. Muscle aches and feelings of fatigue only make them push harder. Or they think about their bodies and coach themselves with mental comments like ‘Relax your shoulders’, ‘Keep your body tall’. Most runners don’t exclusively use one thinking style all the time. Without realising it, you may switch between several different mental strategies in different situations, depending on what works for you.

► BOREDOM

You might think that so long as you’re in the middle of a race with cheering crowds, booming music, and amazing sights to see, your mind will never go numb. But that’s not always the case. While racing can be exciting and inspiring, it may also sometimes feel dull and repetitive – especially in a long-distance event with more cows than spectators lining the course.

What’s Going On

Your brain desires novel experiences, which the reward centres of the brain respond to by releasing dopamine, a neurotransmitter that brings on sensations of joy and delight. It really doesn’t matter if you’re on a treadmill or running through the streets of Paris – once the novelty of running or racing wears off, the tap for those feel-good chemicals shuts down, and you may as well be listening to a lecture on the organisational management of office cubicles.

How to Cope

Divide and conquer After weeks or months of training, you might feel ‘over’ the idea of doing another long run – even if that long run is the race itself. Breaking up the full distance into smaller, more manageable chunks helps: for instance, three 40-minute hits of exercise is easier to face than one two-hour chunk. Breaking it up into bite-sized bits makes a long stretch more palatable.

Entertain yourself By all means, put on those headphones and crank up the tunes (so long as you can do so safely). Have a motivating playlist or a podcast ready that engages your brain and takes your mind off the road. Play a mental game, like counting how many of those cows (or red cars or lamp posts) you see along the way. Run your race with a running buddy – even if you didn’t start the race with one. If you see someone who’s running at a similar

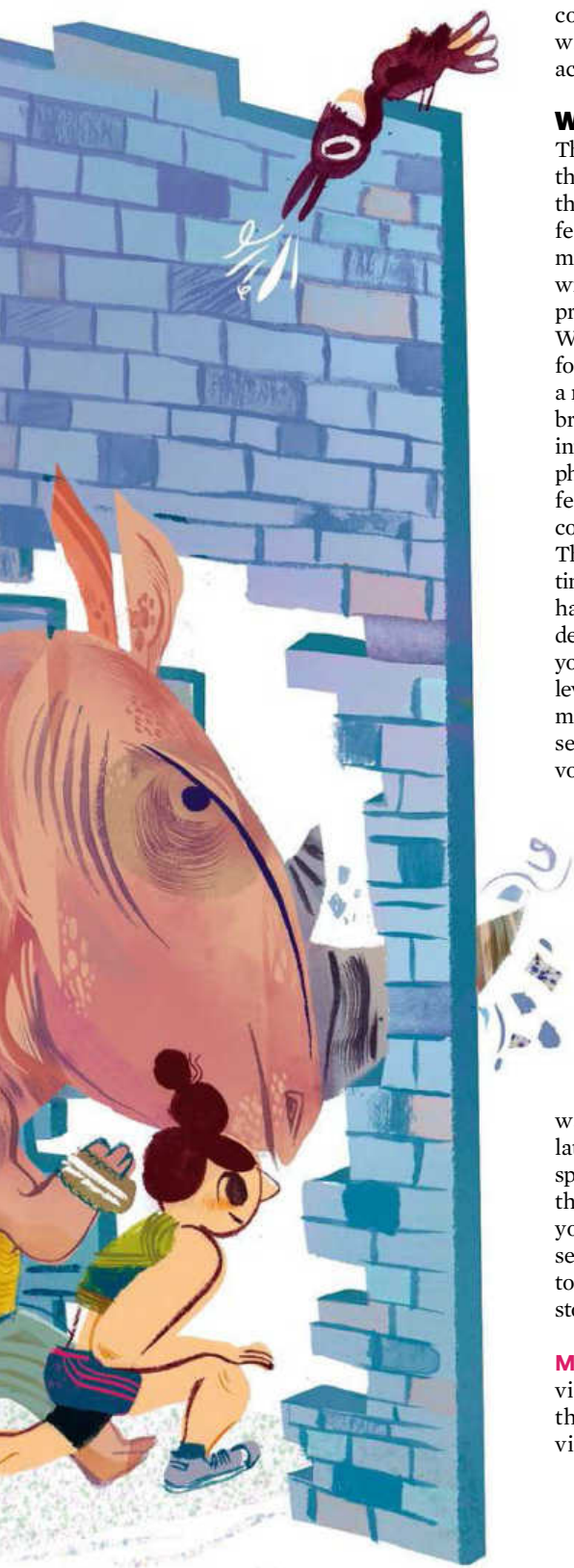
pace, you could attempt to strike up a conversation to see if you could share a few kilometres together.

...Or don’t! Perhaps it’s time to stop thinking about boredom as a bad thing and reframe it as a valuable mental opportunity. Between smartphones, TV, the internet, and countless other forms of distraction, our 21st-century brains are so used to being switched on and engaged, it’s easy to feel panicked anytime there’s nothing entertaining going on. Emerging science is beginning to show that the brain is far from quiet during those dull times. Scientists have found that a neural circuit switches on when the brain isn’t pre-occupied with an external stimulus, and an elaborate electrical conversation takes place between different parts of the brain. Studies suggest that daydreaming and creativity are generated by this network.

Staying calm in
the face of a
monster incline
will help you
conserve energy.



This is an ideal state for the brain to be in when it comes to problem solving. So if you can embrace boredom and let your mind wander along, you might stumble across your best ideas. (Remember this next time you're on a treadmill.)



► HITTING THE WALL

Cyclists refer to it as bonking; Brits sometimes call it 'hunger knock'. By any name, it's a pretty awful experience. When you hit the wall, it can literally feel like you have run face-first into a stack of bricks. It's palpable. Legs start feeling like concrete posts, every step is a triumph of will, and you seriously doubt that the race actually has a finish line.

What's Going On

The prevailing notion has posited that hitting the wall is a purely physical phenomenon. As the theory goes, that overwhelming fatigued feeling and leg heaviness is the result of muscle failure; the muscles and liver have wrung every last drop of glycogen, the body's preferred source of fuel, from their stores. With no more petrol in the tank, you are forced into a survival shuffle. But there is a more recent theory – one that takes the brain's contribution to your performance into account. Noted South African exercise physiologist Tim Noakes agrees that runners feel the wall physically, but he doesn't consider it a purely physical phenomenon. The brain, Noakes believes, tells the body it's time to hit the wall whenever it feels the body has gone too far, too fast. When the brain determines you've reached what it considers your breaking point, it increases serotonin levels. This reduces neural control to recruit muscle fibres, which in turn triggers the sensation of extreme fatigue. Although a voice may whisper in your ear that you've given all you have to give, Noakes says in reality you may be able to dig deeper and give more physically.

How to Cope

Distract yourself Investigations into bonk psychology have looked at which brain strategies work best for the average, non-elite runner. External dissociation (focusing on scenery, crowds, things not directly tied to the race) appears to be the most effective wall-avoidance strategy, and results in a later onset of fatigue. A cheering crowd, a spectator's support sign, or a band playing in the distance may be just enough to distract your brain from the punishing bodily sensations of running without causing you to lose too much focus on pace and water stops (which are still important to monitor).

Mentally hurdle it Positive self-talk and visualisation play a huge part in avoiding the wall. Before the race, I suggest doing visualisation exercises in which you hit

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the wall and picture yourself dealing with it effectively. If you believe you will dominate the wall, you are more likely to make your beliefs a reality.

Face reality If you do hit the wall, sip some sports drink to get some carbs in your system, but don't overdo it. If you have a running partner who can help encourage you through it and run with you to the finish, that's best. Please remember that hitting the wall can affect your ability to think. I have seen plenty of people disoriented and slurring their words, hustled into a medical tent. I feel concern when I see them out on the course wobbling through runner traffic, trying to make it to the finish. There is a point of no return that you need to accept. Going beyond that can be dangerous. If it's not your day, it's not your day.

► POST-RACE LETDOWN

Once the journey is over and you've told your tales of victory and defeat over a few post-race drinks, you may be left feeling a little lost, at sea. After training, thinking, and planning for so long, what do you have left to look forward to?

What's Going On

Hitting your goal is an amazing feeling that is often followed by a real letdown. Completing a race you seriously trained for can leave you asking, *What purpose does my training now serve?* Also, if you've stopped running, you might be missing all those feel-good chemicals that were feeding your brain.

How to Cope

Enjoy your break You pressed the go button for so long that it's hard to power down. But that's exactly what you should do. I know plenty of runners who experience a vague sense of guilt when sleeping late after a race, but R&R is exactly what you need. Even if

you have something else big planned in the future, it won't set you back if you take time to pay attention to other things you neglected in life. So, yes, turn off the alarm clock for a few mornings. Hang out with friends. Catch up on your reading. In general, recharge before you hit the road again.

GREAT MINDS

Mental strategies of top runners



AMBY BURFOOT

winner of the 1968 Boston Marathon, RW editor at large

"I think one of those things that running teaches you is that there is disappointment. Once you get to a certain level of high achievement, you are much more likely to lose a race than win it. It is a negative until you turn it around and refuse to let it be. You find enough in it to keep motivated and keep hoping for the return of that great day. I learned from the running coach Jack Daniels that the great day you have is not a fluke. That's your ability. That's who you are. You don't hit it every day, but that is what you are capable of. I like that. The goal for me was always to figure out the right formula and get back and have a great day again."



JEFF GALLOWAY

1972 Olympian, running coach, RW columnist

"I've used mental training

methods for more than 40 years with myself and my clients. One strategy I call 'dirty tricks.' These are quick fixes that you use to just get from one point to the next. When I was highly competitive, I'd see a person go by and my subconscious would start producing negative thoughts. So I would get out my giant invisible rubber band. I would give a little swoosh with my hand and I would throw the rubber band over their head and around their waist and then start cinching them in toward me so that I could pull off their momentum. All of this was fantasy world, but it got me down the road another kilometre."



DEAN KARNAZES

ultrarunner

"I've run through mud, water, sand, and snow, and over rock, and none of it really bothers me. When I engage in any physical conquest, such as a marathon or ultramarathon, I go into it with the simple commitment to myself that I will try my hardest and give it my all. You can't

control the other competitors, and you can't foresee the unforeseeable. No matter what, the commitment to be the best me that I can be is unchanged. The other thing I have done is shifted my paradigm in respect to pain and struggle. Instead of trying to avoid it, I welcome and celebrate the hurt. Bring it on, baby!"




FRANCIE LARRIEU SMITH

five-time Olympian

"I used visualisation before races all the time. When I would race indoors, I would walk out to the infield and just focus on the lights up in the rafters and think about the race. I would see myself running and winning the race. To me it's just turning all of your energy inward and focusing on the event. Now that I work with athletes as a coach, I encounter people who are terrified of the starting line. I try to explain that it's normal to feel nervous. It's just learning how to channel the energy, to spend some time picturing how you want the race to go."



Reflect Think about your performance – what worked and what you can do better next time. However it went down, it's worth analysing why things went the way they did. You're stocking up information for the next time you're standing at the start of a race. Now you've got some past life to relive, some fodder for positive thoughts or better planning. Avoid the trap of letting others bring you down, especially if you're already feeling a tad disappointed. If someone asks about your time, tell them you finished and it was awesome. If you didn't finish, tell them you are happy with your effort. Don't indulge in comparisons that leave you feeling like you somehow came up short.

Set new goals After you take a pause, consider hitting the accelerator again. If you're burned out, dedicate yourself to something new. Set your sights on a different distance or even a new cross-training activity. Having a new passion project can stoke your love of the road. And a fresh perspective is never a bad idea. 



Excerpted from
The Runner's Brain:
How to Think Smarter
to Run Better, by Dr
Jeff Brown with Liz
Neporent (Rodale),
available at [www.](http://www.takealot.com)
[takealot.com](http://www.takealot.com), R232

***RW*'s 2015**

RUNNERS

of the Year



**FROM THE ROAD TO
TECHNICAL TRAILS,
AT HOME AND
ABROAD, SOUTH
AFRICAN RUNNERS
REALLY DID US
PROUD IN 2015.**

**HERE ARE OUR STARS
OF THE YEAR...**





From having done almost no running seven years ago, to Two Oceans and Comrades champion.

RUNNER

Of The Year

Caroline Wöstmann, 32

By Lindsey Parry

▶ **CAROLINE WÖSTMANN** became the first South African Comrades winner in 14 years, and she was only the second South African female (and fourth athlete overall) to win Two Oceans and Comrades in the same year. She also ran the fastest ever 'Up Run', if calculated in minutes per kilometre, only missing out on the record because an extra 800 metres was added to the route to avoid roadworks.

But it was the story behind Wöstmann's win – how she rose from having done almost no running seven years ago, to Two Oceans and Comrades elite runner – that catapulted her above all other South African athletes.

Wöstmann proudly admits that initially she took up running because she battled to get back to her normal weight after her first pregnancy. She learned as she went along, having to miss a few Comrades – first due to injury, and again during her second pregnancy. She finished in fifth place at the 2014 'Down Run', at the same time suffering from her second stress fracture.

Despite her full-time job at Wits University, the fact that she had to complete and submit her Masters, and her responsibilities as a mother to daughters Gabriella and Isabell, Wöstmann had an ideal build-up to both Two Oceans and the Comrades. She really has shown South Africa that you *can* have your Comrades cake and eat it.

Wöstmann's story has captured the imagination of the running nation, because she's humble, approachable, and in love with running. We can literally see her happiness when she's out running on the road, and she always has time for one more photo with a fan. She's not just a superhero: she's a real-life superhero. →

(Lindsey Parry is a qualified biokineticist and full-time coach to some of SA's top runners and triathletes.)

A Normal Champion

By Bruce Fordyce

► **Wöstmann** was definitely one of the contenders to win the Comrades, but it was a surprise to me that she managed to win both *Two Oceans* and *Comrades* in the same year. Logic over the years has told us you can't do that, because *Two Oceans* takes too much out of you. But Wöstmann taught us that it's possible – and she's become an inspiration to women runners.

Her tactic of taking structured walk breaks was something I hadn't seen in a long time. They were definitely planned; they weren't forced. There's knowledge to be gained from that.

But I agree with Lindsey Parry – it's not just her performance that makes her worthy of this title. It's how she contributes to the sport. Wöstmann is a happy, intelligent and normal runner who takes toilet breaks during the *Comrades*, just like the rest of us. Whenever I've chatted to her I've found her accessible, and not in the least bit aloof. Though she had other responsibilities while she trained for the *Comrades*, which perhaps some of her opponents didn't have, she has an exceptional talent. Wöstmann is a great advert for the sport of running.



ULTRA RUNNER *Of The Year*

Gift Kelehe, 33

By John Hamlett

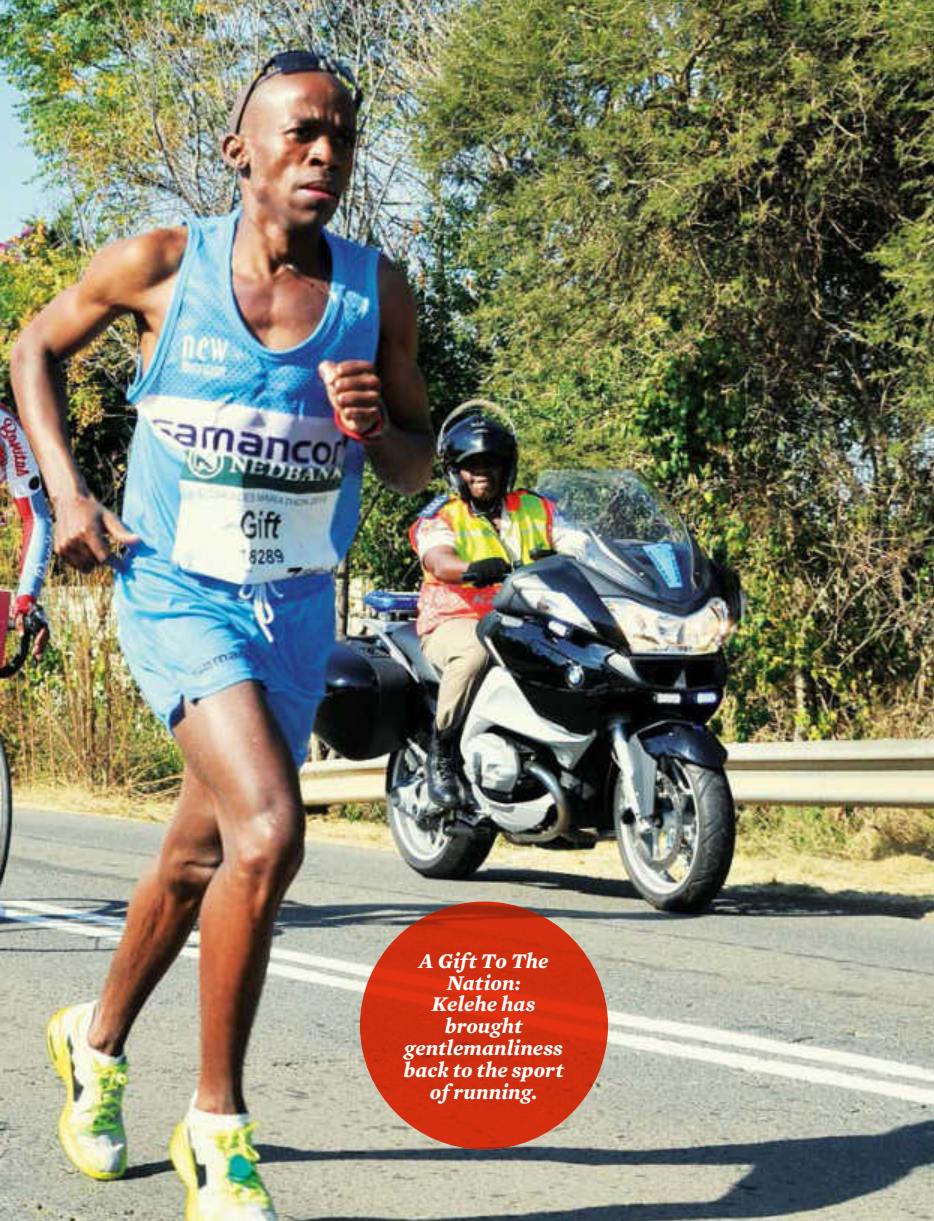
► IT MAY NOT HAVE BEEN A RECORD-BREAKING performance, but Gift Kelehe made history by winning the *Comrades* 14 years after his brother, Andrew Kelehe, won in 2001.

For many years he'd lived in Andrew's shadow, which could've turned out to have a negative impact. But instead he used his brother's success as an indication that his goal of winning *Comrades* one day was attainable. He was a bit young at the time he witnessed Andrew's win, but there and then he decided that one day he would do the same.

To be able to win *Comrades*, you're always treading a fine line between getting strong and breaking down. Two years ago, Kelehe was laid low by a stress fracture, and couldn't do the training he needed to win – the level was too high.

But through his nine-year commitment to training, he could eventually run 250km per week, injury-free, which is what you need to be able to compete at this level.

PREVIOUS SPREAD: PHOTOGRAPHS BY TARRYN HATCHETT (CAROLINE); JACQUES MARAIS (LANDIE); GALLO IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES (RICHARD, WAYDE)



A Gift To The Nation: Kelehe has brought gentlemanliness back to the sport of running.

“...he used his brother’s success as an indication that his goal of winning Comrades one day was attainable.”

Notably, he fitted his demanding training schedule around a full-time job as a policeman in Rustenburg. Sometimes he rose as early as 4am to run. He followed

a strict diet, consisting of seven meals a day, in order to reach his goal weight of 47kg.

Kelehe has changed the culture of running, because he has brought gentlemanliness back to the sport. He is gentle-spirited, honest, full of integrity, and a peoples’ person. He recently ran a relay for the St Vincent School for the Deaf, without asking for anything in return, and he has visited other schools and inspired many children to become runners. That’s why he’s aptly referred to as *A Gift to the Nation*.

(John Hamlett is the coach and manager of the Samancor Elite running team. He has coached 45 Comrades gold medal earners and three winners, including the Kelehe brothers. He is a 2:18 marathon runner and a seven-time Comrades finisher, with a best of 7:08.)

Ultra Runners To Watch In 2016

By Bruce Fordyce

Comrades Winners Over The Last Four Years

Ludwick Mamabolo, Claude Moshiywa, Bongmusa Mthembu and Gift Kelehe have all won, but they’ve only won once. It’s time one of them learned how to win again.



ELLIE GREENWOOD
36, DUNDEE, SCOTLAND

Ellie Greenwood won the last ‘Down Run’ at the Comrades, then came sixth last year. She’s determined to make amends and win in 2016.

Road Runners To Watch In 2016

By Lindsey Parry



DOMINIQUE SCOTT
23, CAPE TOWN

Currently racing in the USA under an athletics scholarship, Scott recently won her last two US collegiate cross-country races, and set PBs from 3 000 metres to 10 000 metres on the track. Scott is a favourite to qualify for the Rio Olympics and run in the final – and for that reason, she will provide another example that South African women, given the right opportunities, can be competitive in international athletics and road running.

You may not see her

representing South Africa, but she will be proudly South African to us, wherever she ends up.



STEPHEN MOKOKA
30, PRETORIA

Stephen Mokoka has been South Africa’s most consistent athlete this year, winning titles from the 1 500 metres to the marathon. He’s a clinical finisher, and even the Kenyans are wary of taking this guy to the last 400 metres of a race if they can help it. He’s another favourite to qualify for the Rio Olympics, in both the 10 000 metres and the marathon.



TRAIL RUNNER *Of The Year*

Landie Greyling, 31

By Linda Doke

► **GREYLING** has had the opportunity to race internationally, because of her consistently good performances in previous years. But the numerous wins and records she's racked up since, both locally and internationally, have been hard won.

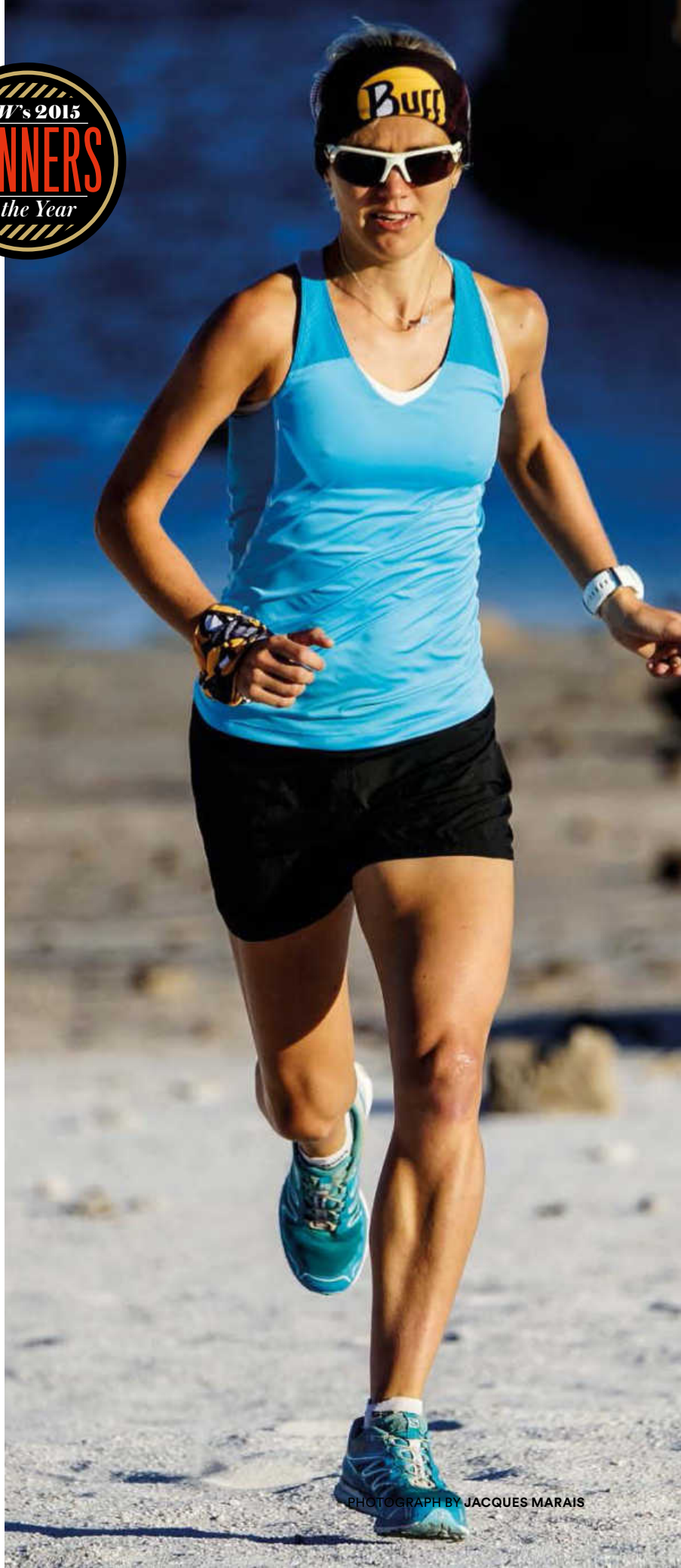
At Transvulcania – a long-distance race considered the hardest mountain ultra marathon in the Canary Islands – things didn't go well for Greyling. She had pushed the mileage too hard in training, and wound up feeling fatigued on race day.

She'd taken on too much, and paid the price. But her setback did teach her a valuable lesson about rest and recovery, and it's evident she learned from it, because then she began to make wiser choices about the events she was going to race hard and strive to win.

Greyling won the 60km Trail du Colorado, on Reunion Island. A couple of weeks after that, she ran the Xtreme Dodo Trail 50km in Mauritius – the African Championships for the Skyrunner® Series – which she won, breaking the women's record. She downscaled from the 100km race to the 65km at the Ultra Trail Cape Town (UTCT), and it paid off – once again, she'd bagged another women's record.

Greyling is good for trail running as a brand. Her positive, fun-loving and approachable demeanour, passion for the trails, and the fact that she looks good running in the mountains, have all made her a likeable, much-loved character. She has a strong presence at races, big and small, and always has time to talk to a broad spectrum of runners, from beginner to professional. Importantly, she makes trail running accessible to all.

(Linda Doke is a leading South African ultra-distance trail runner.)



The Legend

Ryan Sandes, 33

By Linda Doke

► It's been a tough year for Sandes. He battled to recover from the glandular fever he suffered at the end of 2014, which prevented him from returning to full racing condition. (Sandes had to drop out of two of his bucket-list races this year: the Western States® 100-Mile Endurance Run and the Ultra-Trail du Mont-Blanc® (UTMB). – Ed.) But despite that challenge, he remains a hero in every trail runner's eyes.

The trail-running community can relate to Sandes, because he admits his flaws. He doesn't always break records the first time round, but he's humble enough to learn from his mistakes, dust himself off and try again. After a failed (due to flooding) attempt at the Fish River Canyon Trail route record, he spent 18 months planning his return, and smashed the record on the challenging 84-kilometre course – for no reward other than personal satisfaction. His actions have won hearts, and inspired the everyday runner. That's why we shared his disappointments in 2015 just as much as his triumphs in the past.

Greyling made wiser choices about the events she was going to race hard and strive to win.

PHOTOGRAPH BY KOLESKY/NIKON/RED BULL CONTENT POOL (SANDES, MADIBA)



Trail Runners To Watch In 2016

By Linda Doke



KERRY-ANN MARSHALL
31, CAPE TOWN

I would put my money on Kerry-Ann Marshall for great performances next year. She comes from a running background, and she certainly has fast times in her genes – her brother is Xterra champ Stuart Marais.

Marshall is what we call a hybrid runner: she loves running on the road, and achieved a Comrades PB of 7:08.57 in 2014, placing 13th lady overall, but she also won the ladies' race both at the Hout Bay Trail

Challenge, in 4:45.10, and the Ultra Trail Cape Town® 100km, in 11:53.03. But throughout all of her top performances, she's remained utterly humble – the mark of a true champ.



THABANG MADIBA
31, GA-RANKUWA, PRETORIA

So far, Thabang Madiba has had a superb 2015, including second place at the 50km Xtreme Dodo Trail in Mauritius. I've no doubt 2016 will bring even greater performance gains for this trail-running star.



Murray will be the one to watch in the triathlon event at the 2016 Summer Olympics.

TRIATHLETE

Of The Year

Richard Murray, 24

By Paul Kaye

► **FIVE YEARS AGO**, he splashed and thrashed his way through a 1500m swim in 24 minutes. Now he glides through the water and exits in 18 minutes, but believes there is still much work to be done. This is Richard Murray, Durbanville-born South African elite triathlete.

Murray started 2015 on the podium in Abu Dhabi, and finished the year on the podium in Cozumel. He finished top five in every start but one, including two ITU World Cup wins. And, most notably, he finished third at the Rio Olympics test event in August this year. This also ensured that he qualified to represent South Africa at the 2016 Olympics.

He thrilled home audiences in April at the Discovery WTS Cape Town when he used his power on the bike, making sure the likes of Ali Brownlee and Javier Gomez (respective Olympic gold and silver medallists in London 2012) had to work hard. Then he ignited the pace on the run from T2, leading for a while until Brownlee kicked, Gomez followed, and they managed to snap that fragile elastic. Murray finished fourth that day, and gave South African fans much to scream about.

Some of his past successes include winning the SA junior MTB champs, the under-15 SA cross-country championship and the junior World Duathlon champs back-to-back. He made the move from duathlon to triathlon in 2008, and considering Murray

is only 24, it's clear that his best performances are still to come.

I remember announcing Murray at the BSG/Energade Sprint races – where he would struggle on the swim, and fight so hard on the bike and run. That first win in Port Elizabeth will be one he will never forget. He shows the same grit and tenacity now as he did then, but with much more finesse and maturity.

Murray is a strong athlete on the bike, and has a blistering 5-K run on him. He has worked really hard to improve his consistency in the last 5-K of a race, and this shows in his 2015 results – he finished fourth overall in the World Triathlon Series (WTS) rankings.

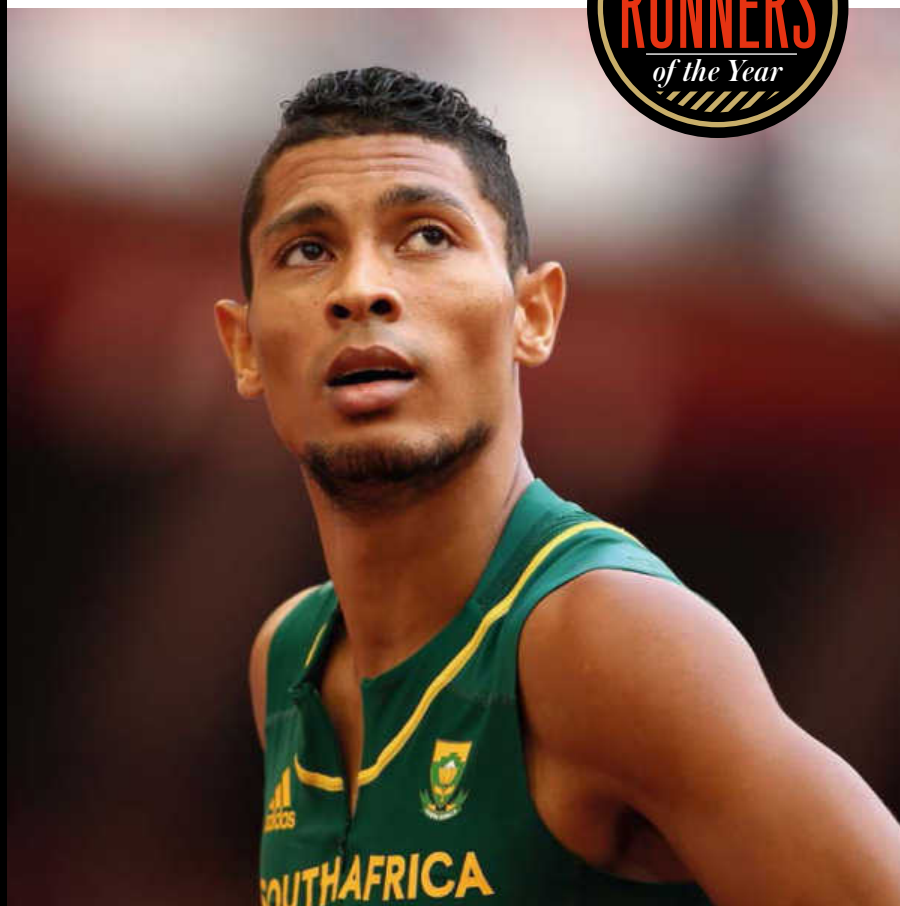
His fellow athletes fear his bike/run prowess, but only have good things to say about this South African role model.

“Richard has really progressed in the last several years, with this WTS season being one of his best yet,” says Marisol Casado, ITU President and IOC Member. “As one of the top cyclists and runners competing in ITU triathlons today, Richard’s tenacity and race tactics made for some incredibly exciting racing this year.”

So what’s next for Murray?

Hopefully, in late August next year we will all be standing in front of our TVs watching the men’s triathlon, and screaming for a young South African as he takes the gold. It’s a real possibility.

(Paul Kaye is an international race commentator, specialising in triathlon.)



TRACK ATHLETE *Of The Year*

Wayde van Niekerk, 23

by Arnaud Malherbe

► **WAYDE VAN NIEKERK** was always a promising athlete. As a South African and African Junior Champion in the 200m, he looked to have a bright future ahead of him, but it wasn't until his move to the 400m that he really caught the eye. So much so, in fact, that

I remember remarking to his coach that “that boy” would be the one to break my South African record over one lap. The unassuming Ans Botha just smiled, and said she shared that sentiment.

But if Van Niekerk had a flaw, it was that he seemed prone to injury. At one stage, it looked like he might never reach his potential – but he has a way of surprising people, and less than two years later, the South African 400m record was his.

Things seemed to happen rather quickly from there on. A year after first breaking 45 seconds in the 400m, Van Niekerk bettered his own time of 44.38 to 44.24, and then, astonishingly, to 43.96, becoming the first African to run faster than 44 seconds, and only the second non-American, behind Kirani James of Grenada. Also telling was the fact the he beat James in that race, setting the scene for things to come.

2015 has been a phenomenal year for one-lap sprinting, with Van Niekerk being joined in the sub-44 club by Isaac Makwala of Botswana, Yousef Ahmed Masrahi of Saudi Arabia and Rusheen McDonald of

Jamaica. Since 1968, only eight men have ever run under 44 seconds – now, suddenly, four have done it in one year!

The 400m World Championships was becoming a mouth-watering prospect. Not only did the young South African have to contend with World and Olympic Champions in Kirani James and LaShawn Merritt, he also had to face the fastest field ever assembled.

While Van Niekerk went into the World Championships unbeaten, he was still a relative novice over 400m. By his own admission (and his coach's), he had really only started proper 400m training in 2015, a consequence of having to manage the injuries that had plagued him. He also hadn't quite figured out the perfect race tactics, trying out different combinations of starting slow and finishing fast, and vice versa. In fact, the 43.96 he ran was the first time I'd ever seen him run a near-perfect race. Everything before that was an experiment.


What was clear was that he had raw talent in abundance, and fantastic speed, being one of only four men to have run the 400m faster than 44 seconds and the 200m faster than 20 seconds. It's rare that a man who can run a 200m that fast would submit to the rigours of training for the 400m, arguably the toughest event on the track.

So Van Niekerk had the speed, and the talent, but would he have the mental fortitude to prevail in Beijing? On 26 August 2015, he answered that question emphatically. He took on the best in the world and won the World Championships, in a time that no-one could have predicted. His 43.48 seconds left Merritt trailing in his wake in 43.65 (a personal best as well), and the imperious Kirani James came close to his own personal best in third.

That time made Wayde van Niekerk the fourth-fastest 400m runner of all time, as well as the fastest African and non-American ever. He had to be stretched off the track, proving that he gave it his all.

Van Niekerk may well be the perfect package: in the toughest race out there, he proved he had the speed, stamina, endurance and mental toughness to be the best in the world.

What's more, I think “that boy” will be the one to break Michael Johnson's world record. Just give him time, and he will probably surprise you.

(Arnaud Malherbe is a former SA 400m champion and record-holder.) 



BREAK-THROUGH RUNNER

Of The Year

Charné Bosman, 40

Living proof that no matter how uncertain your future, if you fight hard enough, you can turn things around.



HOW 'SECOND' WAS MY

BIGGEST

WIN

**THIS WAS
THE YEAR A
COMRADES
QUEEN WON AN
EPIC BATTLE WITH
HER HEALTH.**

By Charné Bosman

I'm forever thankful for all the amazing experiences and opportunities that running has already offered me in life. In fact, I've grown up a runner, I've developed as a person through running – I am what I am because of running. Running doesn't just take you to amazing places, it also offers such a range and variety of relationships.

Early in 2012, after I'd represented South Africa 22 times in cross-country, half marathons, world relays, Commonwealth Games and Student Games, my husband suggested that I should consider focusing on ultra marathons.

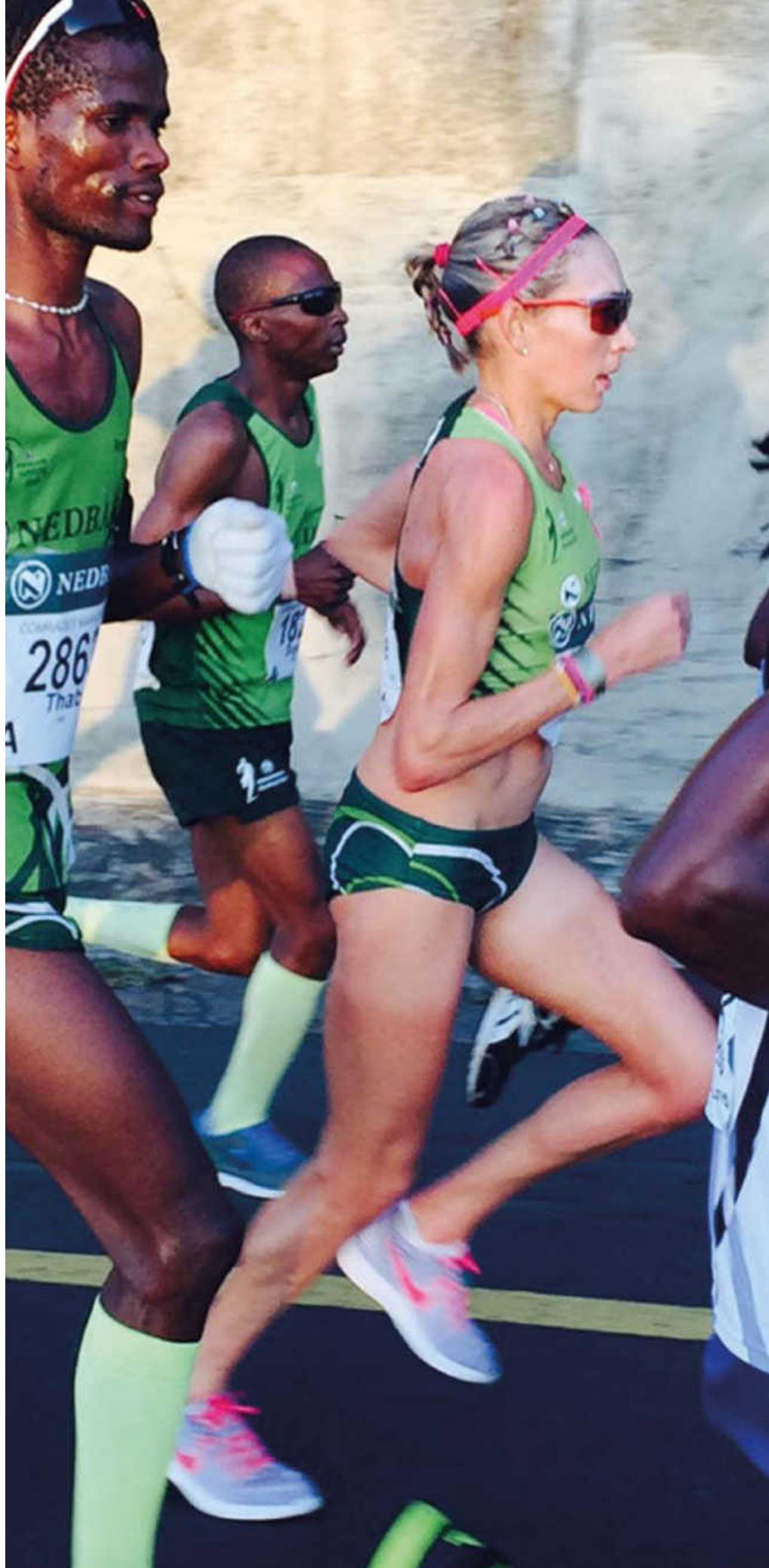
Long story short, my build-up went really well, and before I knew it, I was lined up for my first Two Oceans Ultra. I ran one of my best races ever. I came third, which then changed to second place (*as Russian Natalia Volgina, the initial winner, tested positive, and was stripped of the win*). I was only 21 seconds behind the winner, Zimbabwean Thabita Tsatsa, and my time of 3:40.19 was the third-fastest ever by a South African. I averaged 3:55 min/km over the 56km. A dream run – but also poignant, as it was the last time my father would see me race.

Shortly after Two Oceans I stood at the start of my first Comrades. I managed fifth, and was also the first South African home. Everyone agreed that I'd had an absolute dream debut in ultra marathons.

Comrades was on 2 June 2013. At 2:30am on 15 July, a Monday morning, I received the terrible news that my father had passed away. I felt the pain deeply; it was as if my world had fallen apart.

What I didn't realise – until December that year – was that the trauma I experienced had affected my thyroid. At first it was overactive; then, after treatment, underactive. The thyroid is like the carburettor of a car: as tiny as it may be, if it's not working, the car ain't going anywhere.

During this time I experienced all the related symptoms. Mood swings, heart palpitations, anxiety, light depression, energy loss, etc. It was one of the hardest challenges I've ever faced. Ask any person with a dysfunctional thyroid, and they'll explain the details to you. They'll also tell you that it's not a quick-fix process: it can take up to a year to stabilise.



But I was still thinking about my next ultra. I decided to run only Comrades in 2014 – an ‘all or nothing’ approach. Build-up went really well, and I still remember how (2015 *Comrades* and *Two Oceans* champion) Caroline (Wöstmann) and I would do our long runs together in Mpumalanga, and Caroline would say, “Charné, your form is such that you are going to win this race.”

After returning from the three-week training camp, all that was left to do was tapering. But I had my thyroid checked, and my doctor was very concerned. My levels were way out. In an effort to assist me, my doctor made the mistake of increasing my medication dose way too fast.

Race day came, and when I told my husband that my legs felt stiff after only

“I was constantly reminded by the doctors in the hospital how I’d only just escaped death that day...”

10km, the writing was on the wall. With 29km to go I was lying in fifth position, and the leading South African. At that point I collapsed on the road, as my heart went into a fib – it was vibrating instead of pumping. I was out cold for a couple of minutes before the medics arrived and rushed me off to hospital.

I was constantly reminded by the doctors in the hospital how I’d only just escaped death that day, and when they looked at my thyroid levels, they said I should never have been allowed to start.

This was the start of a long and slow process to try and stabilise my thyroid levels. One week you feel great, the next week the opposite. And so it continues. During this time my running confidence dropped completely, and understandably, I never knew how I was going to feel the next day. I visited a sport psychologist to



At Comrades 2014, Bosman collapsed on the road. Doctors told her she was lucky to be alive.

assist me.

But I was training again, and decided to run both Two Oceans and Comrades Marathons in 2015. Prior to Two Oceans, my coach told us that on paper, I was in shape to win. But in the lead-up to the race my face suddenly got bloated, and I knew something wasn’t right. I felt completely flat, and managed fifth.

With all of this in my mind I recommitted 100% to Comrades, regardless. I decided that giving up was not an option. One week out, and believe it or not, my thyroid levels started shifting again... in the wrong direction.

My doctor suggested that I should increase my medication, but that little voice told us differently. Carel kept saying that we shouldn’t adjust my medication again at this late stage, and I agreed. This was a total leap of faith.

CRASHED OUT


On the start line my legs felt good... really good. As I’d crashed out the previous year, we decided to follow a Bruce Fordyce race plan – holding back for 60 or 65km, and then going flat out.

By 60km, Carel told me I was lying fourth, seven minutes behind the Russian twins, Olesya and Elena Nurgalieva. 60km was my cue to go, and I still felt good. The gap came down by 1.30 every three kilometres, and soon I could see them in the distance. I passed them both just before small Polly’s, and gained a further seven minutes on them by the finish.

I was smiling from ear to ear as I approached the stadium in second place, behind Caroline. I almost could not believe that it had worked out this time.

We all have our own stories. Stories of suffering and hardship. Stories of desperation and doubt. Stories of pain and uncertainty. Mine don’t even come close to what some have gone through.

That said, no-one can escape this in life. This is life, after all. But I want to encourage you to keep on trying. Keep on dreaming. Keep on fighting, and keep on believing – no matter how uncertain the future might look or feel.

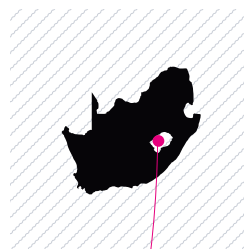
Your season, too, will certainly turn. 

Destination rakensberg

*High enough
to be tricky and
require utmost
concentration;
low enough to
run on.*

Planning a running holiday? The Northern Drakensberg's myriad mountain trails, spectacular views, crisp mountain air, and warm hospitality make it one of the world's highest-rated physical tourism regions. And it's an easy drive from most of South Africa's major population centres.

By Warren King



The Drakensberg Mountains form the spine of South Africa, stretching from Mpumalanga to the Western Cape. They boast the kind of terrain that the very inventors of trail running must have had in mind when they first decided to venture off the tar.

Conveniently located within easy weekend-driving distance from Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and the Free State, and offering a host of other activities besides trail running, it's the ideal holiday destination for everyone, runners and non-runners alike.

Adventuring

◀ **RUNNING**

Pick a spot, and start running: it's as simple as that. There are trails everywhere, and even where there aren't, there's nothing as invigorating as bundu-bashing through the Drakensberg bush. It's high enough to be tricky and require your utmost concentration, yet low enough to run on.

That being said, there are two things to keep in mind: firstly, trail running is, by definition, not a risk-free activity. As any trail runner will tell you, anything can happen – and it usually does. So avoid running alone, or in remote areas where nobody knows where you are, or might be, should you not return.

For those adventurous enough to go it alone anyway, make sure you're prepared. →

SURVIVAL ESSENTIALS

- A hydration pack, with extra water
- Emergency snacks
- Warmer (and ideally, waterproof) clothing, irrespective of the weather forecast – these are the mountains, where conditions can change rapidly.
- A headlamp
- A cell phone. (Although remote, and lacking in cell-phone towers, the area is pretty well covered.)

▶ Secondly, remember that this is South Africa. Unlike in England, the concept of ‘universal access’ doesn’t exist, so if you run on private property without permission, that’s classed as trespassing.

But there are more than enough trails outside of private property, of all shapes and sizes, to keep you busy for a lifetime. Each hotel and resort will point out nearby routes. Head to the All Out Adventures Centre, based at the Drakensberg’s thrilling heart, or into the Royal Natal National Park itself.

All Out Adventures maintains and operates a comprehensive network of mountain-biking and trail-running trails, which extend across the entire region. The Centre is headed by proprietors Chris and Loretta – also co-organisers of the annual Runtheberg Trail Run – who can advise you on how to mix and match a variety of trails to build your ideal route; from short, non-technical and flat, to technical ultra distances with huge vertical-elevation gains and losses. They’ll also equip you with handy maps.

In the National Park, don’t expect the same level of advice or support. But you can pick up a free hiker’s map at the Visitors Centre, and make your own trail runs out of the existing hiking trails. For example, the Policeman’s Helmet Hike makes for a fantastic, varied trail run, featuring a mixture of everything. An added bonus: it’s an out-and-back trail, so if you get tired or run out of time, you can turn back at any point.

The full trail, from the car park to the top of the Helmet and back, is roughly 12 kilometres, and should take the average runner at least two hours. Alternatively, the famous Crack & Mudslide Hike makes for a properly challenging trail, incorporating steep and slippery sections, chain ladders, and great technical running for experienced runners. Expect 12 to 15 kilometres of running that will take the average runner at least three and half hours to complete.

Please note: in the tradition of trail running, times and distances given here should be used as broad indicators, rather than exact specifications. Don’t rely on free maps for exact times and distances, as at the time I last visited, some of the trails (specifically Policeman’s Helmet) were dramatically inaccurate.

Lastly, remember you’re sharing the trails with others. Always give hikers and walkers the right of way. Also, remember that many of them will probably be foreign visitors, so do try to impress them with our typical South African etiquette, friendliness and hospitality.



◀ MOUNTAIN BIKING

Many trail runners are also passionate about mountain biking, or at least have partners or family members who love to pedal. You can hire a bike from All Out Adventures, and Chris and Loretta’s team are on hand to give you expert advice on aspects like trails and conditions. Or you can bring your own bike, and follow one of their maps.

Trails are graded from Beginner to Black Diamond equivalent, and you’ll need to purchase a trail pass if you want to ride on them, either from the Centre, or from most resorts.

Flying Trapeze: Stomach flipping, eye watering and adrenaline packed.



OTHER ADVENTURES

Besides horse riding, which is offered at most hotels, another way to experience the thrill of the mountains is to avail yourself of a range of stomach-flipping, eye-watering adrenaline activities: zip lining and cable tours, the Bungee Bounce, flying trapeze, quad biking, paintball, and the King Swing, guaranteed to make even the most hardened adventurer squeal a little.

Sleeping In

Visitors to the Drakensberg are always surprised at the range and quality of accommodation. Too numerous to list them all – I’ll mention just a handful of well-known spots.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHERIE VALE (MOUNTAIN BIKERS) / COURTESY OF ALL OUT ADVENTURES (FLYING TRAPEZE) / MONTUSI MOUNTAIN LODGE (STEAK)



Camping in the 'Berg is the best way to sleep under the stars.

CAMPING

Where better to pitch your tent and braai than in the heart of the uKhahlamba-Drakensberg Royal Natal National Park? The Park's Mahai and Rugged Glen campsites have to be two of the best places in the world to sleep under the stars. There are electricity points aplenty (for those that need them), and the ablution facilities are as good as they get.



FAMILY-FRIENDLY

ATKV Drakensville has fun facilities and self-catering capacity. The Cavern, nestled below the Little 'Berg at the end of the road, offers a convenient baby-sitting service, and the buffet is the stuff of legend. The Three Cities Alpine Health Resort, Orion Mont-Aux-Sources Hotel and long-standing favourite Little Switzerland are also great options.



LUXURY

In my opinion, beautiful, remote, mountain destinations don't generally go well with upmarket, luxury accommodation; but Montusi Mountain Lodge is the exception. It's perfectly positioned, with sweeping views of the magnificent Amphitheatre, easy access to the National Park, and fantastic trails that start and finish at your doorstep. This is the ideal place to impress your new trail-running girlfriend, or reward your hiking husband. And there's nothing quite like hitting the trails hard, before heading back to the Lodge to indulge in outstanding fare, prepared daily by Montusi's world-class chefs, and then crashing in a luxury chalet.

Eating Out

Most visitors tend to eat at their accommodation, so stand-alone restaurants that serve walk-in guests are few and far between. But the experience of a proudly owner-operated restaurant is worth the short, scenic drive.

TOWER OF PIZZA

Another Northern-Drakensberg culinary legend of note, Tower of Pizza is perfectly positioned on the tributary road to the heart of the mountains and the Park. No trip to the area is complete without eating at the Tower. Like it says on the tin, this is a family restaurant that specialises in expertly-baked pizzas, all named after local mountains and hikes. The menu, broad enough to satisfy parent and child alike, also features delicious pastas, tramezzini, salads and famous lamb chops. All major credit cards are accepted, but it's worthwhile noting they don't accept cash.

THE PHATT CHEF

A visit to Simon's award-winning establishment is a must. It's located at the top of the Oliviershoek pass on the R74, a road from the bottom to the top of the pass that has been fixed up and is now a scenic delight to drive.

Steaks are the worthy speciality, paired with delicious sides and unique sauces. Having said that, the menu does include some interesting vegetarian alternatives. A tip: find a designated driver to take you back down the pass after you've eaten, because you won't want to miss sampling the extensive wine list.

The Phatt Cheff is also a convenient stop either on the way in, or on the way home, from Gauteng and all points north – especially if you've had enough of roadside fast food.

BINGELELA

One of those rare gems, boasting a mind-bogglingly broad menu, and the quality of delivery of each and every menu item far surpasses most big-city standards. Authentic Thai curries, steakhouse-quality steaks, thin-crust pizzas cooked to perfection, and speciality dishes including calamari steak, chicken roulade and locally-bought 'Berg trout. Top it off with a decadent dessert and a perfect espresso.

Just off the R74, on the way to Bergville, Bingelela is well worth the easy 20-minute drive. A reward for a hard day's mountain touring, and/or to fill up for the next one.



Don't pass on dessert; Bingelela's are decadent.

Whether you're an ultra champion in search of technical altitude training, a road-runner looking for a break from the tar, or a remote-control expert simply looking to get off the couch, the Northern Drakensberg should be right up there on your bucket list.



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ED'S CHOICE



GAUTENG

WEDNESDAY 16 DECEMBER

7.9

The Pirates Wobblers & Wiggles Hat Run

Pirates Club, 25 Braeside Street, Greenside; 7.9km: 8am

Gregory Cleeve-Edwards
083 7174900 / Pirates Club
011 646 5025

Wacky Races:
From mortarboards to makarapas, a hat is compulsory equipment for this race.

Outlandish, over-the-top and creative hats are compulsory at this wacky celebration – you'll be disqualified if you aren't wearing one! There is just one water point on the route, famous because it's stocked with beer, as well as the usual water and Coke. Proceeds will be donated to charity. Everyone is welcome; walkers, wheelchair users, prams and (sociable) dogs on leads. If you miss the pre-entries (which close on 8 December), you can still enter on race day, from 6:30am.



SATURDAY 12 DECEMBER

1.5 5 10

Nedbank Skosana Road Race

PTA Correctional Services, Kgosi Mampuru Street, Pretoria; 10km & 5km: 6:30am; Street Mile: 8:30am
Enoch Skosana 082 825 8001

WEDNESDAY 16 DECEMBER

5 10

Gauteng Striders 10km & 5km Fun Run

Vosloorus Sports Stadium, Vosloorus; 10km Run & Walk & 5km Fun Run: 7am
Livingstone Jabanga
082 466 4291 / 011 534 2690

THURSDAY 31 DECEMBER

5 10

Old Years' Race Run/Walk

Rietondale Park, North Street, Pretoria; 10km & 5km Fun Run: 5pm
Daan du Toit 082 572 4169



THURSDAY 31 DECEMBER

2 4 6 8 10

Nedbank (NRCVT)

Ou Jaar's Party 10km

Kollegepark Primary School, corner of Theo Wassenaar and General Froneman Street, Vanderbijlpark; 10km, 8km, 6km, 4km, 2km: 6pm
Dawid Jordaan 082 364 1954



SEARCH THE COMPLETE LIST OF RACES IN SOUTH AFRICA: WWW.RUNNERSWORLD.CO.ZA/RACE-CALENDAR

DISTANCE ICONS: FIND EVENTS WITH YOUR FAVOURITE DISTANCES QUICKLY, USING THE FOLLOWING KEY: 0-9KM 10-19KM 20-29KM 30+KM

ED'S CHOICE



*That's the spirit!
Many clubs
run in buses,
hoping to win
the trophy.*



KWAZULU-NATAL

SUNDAY 13 DECEMBER

15

Illovo Sugar 15km Christmas Challenge

**Westville Athletic Club House, 123
Maryvale Road, Westville, Durban;
15km: 6am
Sharon Schubach 082 414 1783
www.westvilleac.co.za**

The silly season is fast approaching, and this is one of the most festive races on the calendar. It was first run in 1993 and is now very popular among KZN runners. T-shirts will be awarded to the first 1700 finishers within the cut-off, prizes to category winners, and there will be lots of lucky-dip and spot prizes. Many clubs run in buses, and a trophy is awarded to the bus with the best spirit. The bus competition is pre-entry only, but individuals can enter at the Westville Clubhouse on 12 December (10am – 4pm), or on race day from 5am.

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SUNDAY 6 DECEMBER

10 15

**BMG/Stainbank Cup 15km
Run & 10km Walk
Yellowwood Park Sports Club,**

**Barbet Road, Yellowwood Park,
Durban; 15km Run & 10km
Walk: 6am
Fred Schoon 083 384 4053 /
Dowan Burton 081 354 1718
www.ywpac.co.za**

TUESDAY 15 DECEMBER

5 10

My Life, My Future, Mandela 27 Challenge

**Green Hub, Blue Lagoon,
Durban; 10km & 5km Run &
Walk: 6pm
Anand Niacker 083 783 6363**

SUNDAY 20 DECEMBER

10 21.1

Dolphin Coast 21.1 & 10km Road Race

**Sugar Rush, Ballito, North
Coast; 21.1km: 6am; 10km: 7am
Barry Holland 083 252 0691**

EASTERN CAPE

BORDER

SUNDAY 13 DECEMBER

5

Jingle Bells 5km Charity Fun Walk

Gonubie Sports Fields, Main Road, Gonubie, East London; 5km Family Walk: 8am

Mark Lindstrom**082 553 0949**

EASTERN PROVINCE

SATURDAY 5 DECEMBER

5 10 42.2

Aspen Pharmacare PE City Marathon

NG Kerk Lorraine, Marne Avenue, Lorraine, Port Elizabeth; 42.2km: 5am; 10km: 6am; 5km Fun Run: 7am

Shaun Roberts 082 711 1341**/ Robert Montgomery****072 919 1054****www.crusaders-athletic-club.com**

SATURDAY 19 DECEMBER

5 10

Dromedaris Holiday Run 10km & 5km

Dromedaris Furniture Store, Dromedaris Street, Jeffreys Bay; 10km: 7am; 5km Fun Run: 7:05am

Kobus Joubert 082 490 7218**(after hours)** →SEARCH THE COMPLETE LIST OF RACES IN SOUTH AFRICA: **WWW.RUNNERSWORLD.CO.ZA/RACE-CALENDAR**

ED'S CHOICE



WESTERN CAPE

WEDNESDAY 9 DECEMBER

5 10

Taal Monument 10km Nite Race**Taal Monument, Gabbema Doordrift Street, Paarl; 10km: 6:30pm; 5km Fun Run: 6:40pm Sybrand du Plessis 083 444 6940**

The holidays are all about having fun, so what better time to try racing after dark? A challenging route winds its way from the Taal Monument, on and around the Drakenstein mountains and through the surrounding winelands. The second half is uphill, so don't expect to run a negative split. But the scenery is so beautiful you won't even notice the incline. Pre-entries are available until Friday 4 December, but you can also enter on race day from 5pm.



WEDNESDAY 2 DECEMBER

10

Metropolitan 10kmParc du Cap, Mispel Road, Bellville; 10km: 6:30pm **Malcolm Hays 071 149 5765**

SATURDAY 5 DECEMBER

5 10 21.1

Mossel Bay Mall RaceMossel Bay Mall, Heiderand, Mossel Bay; 21.1km Walk: 5:30am; 21.1km Run & 10km: 6am; 5km Fun Run: 6:15am **Skalla van Schalkwyk 044 601 2825 / Antoinette du Preez 071 549 4000**

WEDNESDAY 9 DECEMBER

10

Correctional Services 10km**Night Race**Pollsmoor Correctional Facility, Steenberg Road, Tokai; 10km: 6:30pm **Sipho Sithole 072 312 4489**

SATURDAY 19 DECEMBER

6 10

Onrus 10km & 6km Fun Run

Milkwood Restaurant, Onrus River Beach, Onrus; 10km: 7am;

6km Fun Run: 7:15am

Carina van der Merwe 082 823 8632 / Les Hanna 028 316 3820

SATURDAY 26 DECEMBER

16

Tokai Manor House 16kmMathematics Academy, Firgrove Way, Tokai; 16km: 6:30am **Paul Murphy 082 878 1987 / Laura Hiddleston 083 964 1756**

THURSDAY 31 DECEMBER

5 10 21.1

Dangerpoint Half MarathonGansbaai Primary School, corner of Ridderspoor and Dahlia Street, Gansbaai; 21.1km: 7am; 10km: 7:30am; 5km: 8am **Boats van Staden 072 789 3627**

ED'S CHOICE



TRAIL RUNNING

SATURDAY 12 DECEMBER

3 10 21.1

3 10 21.1

Kempston Hogsback Half Marathon

Arminel Hotel, 18 Main Road,
Hogsback; 21.1km & 10km:
8am; 3km: 11:30am
Sharon 083 284 3781

Run on a magical, pine-forest-covered mountain, with forest streams, mountain reed buck and wild horses. Afterwards, relax around the pool until prize-giving starts. There's a bar at the hotel that also sells burgers. Participants are encouraged to bring clothing, books and food for pupils attending the Crabbush School. The trophy that will be awarded to the top three finishers is a Hogsback hog, made out of clay by the local hogmakers.

*Hunting
Hobbits:
Through the
forest, up the
mountains
and past the
waterfalls.*



WEDNESDAY 2 DECEMBER

4 8

Energizer Night Trail Run

Randpark Golf Club, Setperk Road,
Johannesburg; 8km: 7:30pm; 4km:
7:40pm

Heidi Muller 082 564 6468 / Stephan
Muller 083 226 3265

SUNDAY 13 DECEMBER

5 12 18

Umhlanga Jockey Summer Festival Trail Run and Walk

Umhlanga Promenade, Umhlanga;
18km: 6am; 12km: 6:05am; 5km: 6:10am

Buzz Bolton 082 956 1608
www.umhlangatourism.co.za



PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRIS HITCHCOCK (TRILOGY TRAIL RUN)

SUNDAY 13 DECEMBER

5 10 15

Trilogy Trail Run, presented by Falke

Warwick Wine Estate (on the

R44, between Stellenbosch and Klapmuts); 15km: 7am; 10km: 7:15am; 5km: 7:30am

Dirtopia Trail Centre

021 884 4752

www.dirtopia.co.za

WEDNESDAY 16 DECEMBER

8 16

Summer Holiday Trail Run

Winterton Country Club, Mayors Walk, Winterton; 16km & 8km: 8am

Spoen Green

079 043 7678

www.facebook.com/summertrailrun

Other Provinces

MONDAY 28 DECEMBER

5 10

Friends of St. Francis Nature
Areas 10km & 5km Run/Walk

Cape St Francis Resort, Da Gama Road, Cape St Francis; 10km Run & 5km Run/Walk: 7:30am

Joan Brady 083 398 3948
www.foster.org.za

FREE STATE

No races scheduled for this period.

NORTH WEST

CENTRAL NORTH WEST

No races scheduled for this period.

NORTH WEST NORTH

No races scheduled for this period.

NORTHERN CAPE

GRIQUALAND WEST

SATURDAY 5 DECEMBER

10 25

PG Glass Magersfontein 25km and 10km Race. Battle for Magersfontein

Magersfontein Battlefield (close to Kimberley); 25km & 10km: 6am

David Janse van Vuuren

083 443 8198

NORTH WEST CAPE

No races scheduled for this period.

MPUMALANGA

No races scheduled for this period.

LIMPOPO

No races scheduled for this period.

WALKING & HIKING

CENTRAL GAUTENG

SUNDAY 20 DECEMBER

5 10

Sowetan Big Race

Elkay Stadium, Rockville,

Soweto; 10km: 7am; 5km Fun

Walk: 7:15am

Pango Makhale 072 556 3678

ADVENTURE RACING & MULTISPORT

SUNDAY 6 DECEMBER

Spur Adventure Duo #3

Oak Valley Estate, Oak Avenue, Elgin

20-25km MTB 5-6km trail run:

8am (solo event)

Ugene Nel 082 658 3078

www.quantumadventures.co.za

Spur Adventure Sprint #3

Oak Valley Estate, Oak Avenue, Elgin

10-12km MTB; 2-3km trail run;

natural obstacles and a water

crossing with ropes/tubes: 9am

(teams of 2 or 3)

Ugene Nel 082 658 3078

www.quantumadventures.co.za

SUNDAY 6 DECEMBER

Kinetic Adventure Race

Venue TBC

25km: 16km cycle, 7km run, 1km

kayak: 8am

Stephan Muller 083 226 3265
www.kineticgear.co.za

SEARCH THE COMPLETE LIST OF RACES IN SOUTH AFRICA: WWW.RUNNERSWORLD.CO.ZA/RACE-CALENDAR

Back of the Pack

BY BRUCE PINNOCK

HOW THE CHAIRLADY STOLE CHRISTMAS

For back-of-the-packers, running during the festive season is life-threatening



It's not the summer heat that our overweight group of stragglers has to worry about – sunshine merely causes heatstroke, and a yearning for large quantities of beer in the cool shade of the closest pub. No, a far worse fate is waiting to snare the unsuspecting, slow runner in her tinsel-covered jaws.

You see the back-of-the-packer is a prime target for club predators – like our chairlady, Barbara. At Christmas, she teams up with the club entertainment secretary, Joyce, to stalk the slowest runner in our club. Then, using dubious tactics that have probably been outlawed by the Geneva Convention, they ruthlessly cut him out of the herd, skilfully tearing down his weak objections, and press-gang him into agreeing to don the XXXL Santa suit, with the promise of free beer.

Before we could sing *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, Jolly Roger had agreed to be Father Christmas at our annual Club Christmas Party.

There he stood, kitted out in traditional red-and-white winter woollies, beneath the beating African sun. And no Santa outfit is complete without the red-hat-and-pom-pom, and a false white beard that wraps around your face like a balaclava. Sweating profusely, Roger faced a swarm of one million screaming, sticky kids. And he had to be jolly. He had to smile, and utter hearty Ho, Ho, Ho's, as they clambered all over him,

and tried to pull off his beard.

That was last year. We learned then that the Club Christmas Party is fraught with danger for the XXXL brigade.

This year, nobody at the back of the pack wanted to fall prey to a similar fate to poor Roger. So we ran in a bunch for safety, glancing nervously over our shoulders. But sure enough, catching up fast was the predatory Barbara, and her sidekick, Joyce.

“Before we could sing *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, Jolly Roger had agreed to be Father Christmas...”

Only Mpho seemed relaxed. “They’ll never ask me,” he stated, confidently. “Everyone knows that if you live in the North Pole, you’re pale as can be. It’s you lot that’ll be called upon to help preserve this ‘wonderful’ tradition for our children. Good luck, *whiteys!*”

As he cackled loudly, we gritted our teeth, and tried to speed up as the poisonous pair closed in on us. But it was no use. Agonisingly, we waited for the axe to fall – who would it be this year?

Barbara’s choice amazed us.

“Mpho!” she barked.

“Congratulations. You have been selected...”

“No!” he cried, clearly horrified. “It can’t be me, because... well... the kids will never believe I’m real.”

“No problem,” said Barbara, brushing aside his objection with an almighty clap on the back. “Due to global warming, Santa now has a tan. And besides, it’s tradition.”

“Whose tradition?” Mpho tried to protest, but the rest of us drowned out his reply by joining in with Barbara, mightily relieved we’d been let off the hook.

“A great choice, ladies,” commended Big Mac. “Only just now, Mpho was telling us how much he envied the fact that we could preserve our traditions. Now’s his chance – and we know he won’t let the kids down.”

Kosie added: “Besides, it’s such fun, because you get to ride on the Club Christmas tractor!”


If looks could kill...

Mpho caved in to the inevitable, muttering to himself about silly European traditions.

This weekend we sat comfortably, beer in hand, watching Mpho squirm in 40-degree heat. He was surrounded by swarming kids, desperately trying to get the right present to the right child before all jingle bell broke loose. All the while he Ho, Ho, Ho’d, each time with less and less conviction.

“And why’s he rubbing himself against the tractor?” enquired Zachary.

Kosie smiled grimly. “Itching powder.”

As they say: ‘tis the season to be jolly. 

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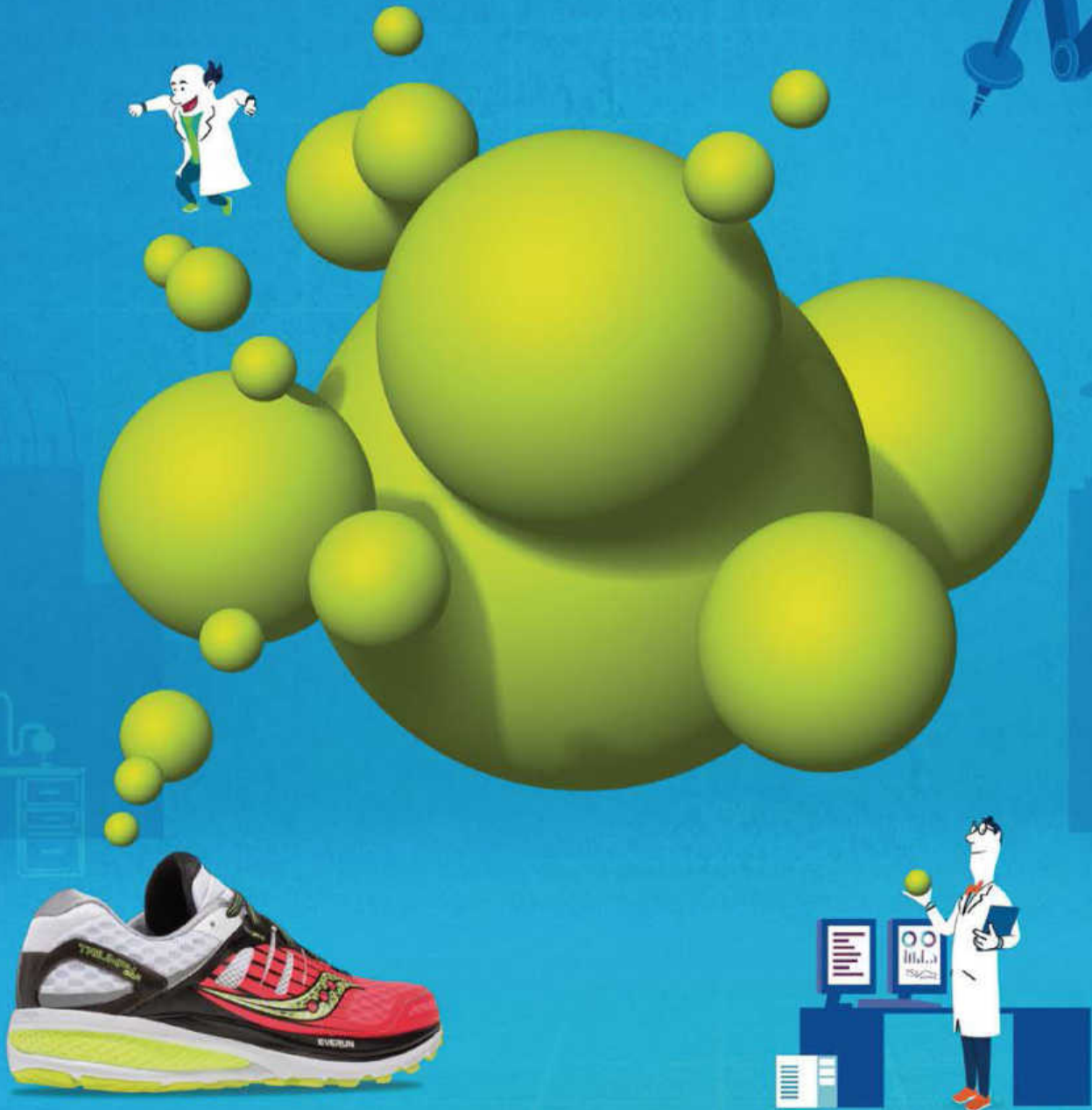
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